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TWELVE

ASPECTS OF CHRIST;

PREPARATORY TO THE

MONTHLY COMMUNION;

WITH

Original Hymns, Meditations, and Prayers.

BY THE REV. GEORGE FISK, LL.B.

PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD,
AND MINISTER OF CHRIST CHAPEL, ST. JOHN'S WOOD.

"CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL."—Colos. iii. 11.

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"Looking unto Jesus,"

IN COMMUNION.

WHEN THOU REJOICEST IN THE SABBATH-DAWN,
SEND THY SOUL UPWARD TO THY RISEN LORD.
AND HAIL HIM AS THE THRON'D INCARNATE WORD,—
THE RICH, FULL FOUNTAIN FROM WHOSE DEPTHS ARE DRAWN
GRACES AND GIFTS THAT STRENGTHEN AND ADORN:
GIVE UP EARTH'S TRIFLES;—WELL CANST THOU AFFORD
TO YIELD THEM ALL—TO SCATTER THEM ABROAD,
AS ONE WHO SAINTED GARMENTS LONG HAST WORN,
WHO, BY THE SPIRIT'S POWER, HAST BEEN NEW-BORN—
TO HEIRSHIP IN THE REALMS BEYOND THE SKY.
WHERE SORROW COMES NOT WITH ITS PLAINT FORLORN,
BUT ALL IS BLISS AND REGAL DIGNITY;—
THRICE-HAPPY CHILD OF GOD—GAZE UP AND SEE
THINE ALL—IN THE INCARNATE MYSTERY!

PREFACE.

I CANNOT pretend to judge how far a book such as this, which I now offer to my brethren in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, may be either needful or desirable. I can only say, that after the substance of it had been uttered from the pulpit, in the way of meditations preparatory to the monthly Communion, I was much requested to set it forth in a more permanent form; and therefore, after making certain allowance for the special kindness of members of my flock, who may have overrated the value of my endeavours for their welfare, I felt at liberty to hope that what had been acceptable, and I trust not unprofitable, to them, might possibly have some good effect among others not so nearly related to me; for no doubt the wants

both of men and of Christians are very much the same everywhere, and under all circumstances.

If, then, I seem to be needlessly adding to the many works extant in the way of preparation for the Holy Communion, the foregoing statement must be my apology; and will, I trust, be the more readily accepted when I add, that my intention is not to enlarge upon either the nature of the Lord's Supper, or the benefits accruing to the devout and spiritual communicant, but rather to present, in a very definite manner, for the acceptance of faith,—that Holy and Blessed One, who is the substance of all that the Sacrament symbolises;—that so, on every sacramental occasion, he may be steadily contemplated in some one of the many aspects in which he is most precious to the soul graciously prepared and enabled to receive him. For I have long had reason to fear, that a want of definiteness in perceiving the *object* on which faith is to make its hold, commonly leads to the substitution of a *sentiment* in the place of a powerful apprehension of

a *fact;* which may account for much of that fluctuation of religious feeling, so commonly complained of by sincerely-intentioned Christian professors. In this respect, the earnest pastor, who knows the wants of members of his own flock, is not likely to be very far wrong in his estimate of the wants of others.

In this small volume, it will be seen that I have endeavoured to exhibit Christ in some of his chief personal relations to believers; in which relations he is to be regarded in the Communion of his body and blood. These are all presented in the most condensed form;—so condensed, as to expose me, in some instances, perhaps, to the charge of obscurity or inconclusiveness, if only a hasty and superficial view be taken of my statements. In which case I would, without arrogancy, be allowed to suggest, that the fault may eventually be found to rest more with the hasty and superficial reader than with the writer, who knows he has neither written rashly as a man, nor without invoking, as a minister of truth, the teaching, guidance, and direction

of the great Teacher—God the Holy Ghost.

I am quite aware that some familiar truths will be thought to bear an aspect of novelty; not, perhaps, as to their substance, for there is no novelty in Bible-truth; but as to the mode in which they are presented. I therefore enjoin the Christian reader to search minutely, and with a patient, candid spirit, into the written Word—laying aside, for the time, any preconceived view; for many a statement contained in a brief paragraph will, on full investigation, be found to contain the pith and essence of a large breadth of Scripture testimony, which the size of this volume forbade me to cite at length, or even in the way of marginal reference.

My simple aim (so far as I know my own motives and intentions) has been to exalt Christ; and I am persuaded, that any spiritually-taught believer who may not exactly fall in with some of my statements, either at first or at all, will not find ground for charging me with an attempt in anywise to dishonour him; though I am conscious of having everywhere fallen far below

what the dignity of the great subject demands. May God mercifully forgive what is weak, and graciously acknowledge what is true; that so my endeavour may serve to promote the spiritual progress of some of his people.

If complaint should be made that the several topics called for much larger expansion, my answer would be, that I designed them to be *suggestive*, rather than expository; and therefore as inducements to Bible searching during the month preceding each Communion-day, rather than as easy helps to supply the lack of personal exertion and industry. If I had intended full exposition, most persons acquainted with Christian doctrine would know, that nothing like it could be contained in reference to any single topic, in a manual such as this.

Should it be also complained, that there is a reiteration of statement and illustration amounting to sameness, in several of the topics, my answer would be, that they all proceed upon one indispensable principle, (namely, the mystical union between believers and Christ, as the

second Man—the last Adam); which principle seemed to me best kept in view by reproduction, rather than by once stating and enforcing it in a preliminary chapter, where possibly it might be overlooked, and so cause each separate discussion to suffer loss.

I would only add, that, being aware of many minds feeling satisfaction in having a great truth of Scripture embodied in a metrical form, I have cast the leading idea of each subject into a pointed hymn, as energetic as I could make it; while at the end of each, I have appended a meditation and a very brief form of prayer, intended to suggest the state of mind and heart most likely to be produced by a spiritual perception of each aspect of Christ. And my hope, on the whole, is, that if this book be used as intended, with an earnest, patient, and humble purpose of mind, in prayerful reliance on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, it may help to clear the way, in some minds and hearts, for a more intelligent, and therefore profitable, participation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
PREFACE	v
CHRIST OUR PEACE	1
CHRIST OUR HOPE	25
CHRIST OUR WAY	45
CHRIST THE TRUTH	63
CHRIST OUR LIFE	81
CHRIST OUR WISDOM	101
CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS	119
CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION	139
CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION	161
CHRIST OUR BROTHER	181
CHRIST OUR RANSOM	201
CHRIST OUR BELOVED—SECTION I.	221
CHRIST OUR BELOVED—SECTION II.	245

CHRIST OUR PEACE.

Forth to the bleeding Lamb,
My heart would humbly go;
Poor, guilty, helpless, as I am,
Engulf'd in sin and woe.

My God! Thou wilt not smite,
Though I deserve to die;
Thy mercy, robed in heavenly light,
Hath slain the enmity.

Now to the cross I turn,
Where mercy's work was done;
In Jesus, I at once discern
Thy peace, and *mine*, in one.

And now, unto the feast
Which His dear hand prepares,
I go; and on His loving breast
Pour out rejoicing tears.

CHRIST OUR PEACE.

"He is our peace."—Ephes. ii. 14.

Christ is the substance of all that is symbolised in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. If, therefore, we would enjoy the full benefit intended to be conferred by the Holy Spirit, through that strengthening and refreshing means of grace, we must endeavour thoroughly to apprehend Christ, in the various aspects in which he is presented to us in holy Scripture. It is not enough for us to reflect with emotion on what he has done and suffered; we must go further, and realise *what he is*—to us who believe in his person, and in what he has wrought out for us, as the sole mediator between God and man. What Christ *is*—he is to and in them who effectually believe; and the true Christian,

therefore, is he, who by faith through the Spirit, has Christ "revealed" and "formed" in him; for Christianity is Christ manifested to, and diffused among, the living members of his mystical body. Christianity is neither knowledge alone, nor sentiment alone; nor both combined. It is *Christ in us.* There may be ample knowledge, but no Christ. There may be strong sentiment, but no Christianity. But where Christ is indwelling, there will be also the knowledge and the sentiment; and the sacrament of the Lord's supper will then be both significant and edifying.

In the text, let it be observed, our Lord is spoken of by a very definite term of designation: He is said to be "OUR peace." Now this is very different from saying that he is the "Prince of peace," or a peaceful Prince. It also differs from the expression in Colos. i. 20, "Having *made peace* through the blood of his cross." It goes also beyond the declaration in Ephes. ii. 17, that Christ "came and *preached peace* to you which were afar off, and to them

that were nigh." And it has in it more than is contained in Rom. v. 1: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, *through* our Lord Jesus Christ." Observe well the expression in the text. It contains two things: first, that Christ IS peace; secondly, that he is OUR peace. In all the passages just referred to, Christ is evidently spoken of as peace on *God's* side; but in the text, he is set forth as peace on *man's* side. He is therefore *God's* peace, and he is *our* peace. We are well aware that in human affairs, if two persons at enmity are to be reconciled, and the breach between them thoroughly healed, there must be peace *on both sides;* peace on the part of the receiver of a wrong, and peace on the part of the doer of the wrong. The peace on the part of the receiver of a wrong, is a matter of clemency, and therefore the originating act. The peace on the part of the wrong-doer, is a matter of humiliation and satisfaction, followed up by right-doing, and is the conclusive act. Where these things happen on both sides, there is peace established. The breach is healed. The

act of clemency on the one side will not do alone; the act of humiliation, satisfaction, and right-doing on the other side, will not alone avail. They must concur to one end; and that is *peace*. Without such concurrence, the breach continues. It is upon this principle, then, that we are to receive the very definite declaration of the text, that Christ is *our* peace. The gospel plainly announces peace set up on God's side, as an act of clemency. It reveals the ample provision for peace on our side as well as on God's side, as the result of Christ's personal humiliation, satisfaction, and right-doing, on our behalf and in our nature. And when a guilty sinner truly and effectually believes, so as to avail himself of this, he is at once, and by that act of faith, at peace with God. The breach between him and God is healed. There is then peace on both sides.

That Christ is God's peace, or peace on God's side, there is no doubt or question, and I am not announcing any new truth when I affirm it; for it is on record that "God was *in* Christ, reconciling the world unto *himself;*" (2 Cor. v.

19) and we remember that the angelic announcement of Christ's birth was the announcement of Him as *God's* peace; — not as the *herald* of it merely—nor as the *procurer* of it merely—but as *the peace itself.* He was the personation of the Eternal God, in a peaceful attitude towards Man — then in a state of rebellion and disloyalty. When, ages and ages before the coming of Christ in human flesh, God declared his purpose that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, the declaration contained an intimation of purposes of peace on *His* side. When Christ came and "finished" his mediation work, those purposes were manifested—*developed* by the act. It was, therefore, because God had thus set himself at peace with man, through Christ—*his* peace, that he could make an offer, yea, more than that,—could, and did make over, as a free gift in Christ Jesus, eternal life for the acceptance of every sinner; so that, by simply accepting that gift of life, the sinner might "live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave

himself for him." Now, it may be well here to observe, that it was the essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ—the identity of his divine nature with the Father's divine nature, that constituted his qualification for being peace on God's side. The reason why he was so qualified, is the reason why neither angel nor archangel could be. Every indication of clemency towards the guilty must of necessity flow through Christ; and, if he be not God's peace, then there is no peace on the part of God;—He is yet a terrible avenger. But Christ is God's peace; and if a guilty sinner perish, it will be—not because God is at enmity with him, but because he has finally rejected God's peace, and preferred to maintain enmity against a God of peace.

We are now prepared for the statement, that Christ is also *our* peace, or peace on the side of man; and that there is in him, *for us*, exactly that which shall make the peace which there is *already* on God's side—available to us.

And first, let it be remembered that he is our peace, in regard to his *person*. If the possession

of proper and essential deity be his qualification for being *God's* peace—that is, God *manifested unto peace,* then, in like manner, his possession of a proper, real, and substantial humanity, "made of a woman, under the law," (Gal. iv. 4,) is equally, and on the same principle, his qualification for being our peace, or peace on the side of *human nature.* In his august and mysterious person, the extreme points are brought together, till they meet;—the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ takes up into it man's humanity. Having God's holiness, he takes on him, by imputation, man's sin, along with man's nature; so that the imputation of sin to man, which God ceases to make, was directed against Christ, on whom the whole imputation rested; in order that by dealing with it, as will hereafter be stated, he might righteously throw it off, and so put away all cause of enmity between God and man. No being on earth or in heaven could be our peace, or peace on our side, who could not do this. Look steadily at this point; it is of unspeakable importance and

weight. It is surely manifest, that he who could, on man's side, put away all enmity and all cause of enmity, must needs be *man's peace,* or peace on man's side. This, then, we affirm Christ could do, and did. As God *only,* we cannot conceive that he could have done it; because, as God, he could not have had man's sin imputed to him. But, as perfect and sinless man, though "made in the likeness of sinful flesh," he could do it; just because he could have man's sin actually imputed to, and charged against him. When, therefore, Christ took upon him, by imputation, all the sin of all mankind—so that, in point of fact, all sin became concentrated on him, and he so became "the Lamb of God, which taketh *(beareth)* away the sin of the world,"—he plainly became *our* peace—that is, peace on behalf of the whole human family, as well as peace on the part of God;—so that peace, on both sides, centred in him. Had it not been so, we cannot conceive upon what principle God could have made over eternal life in him as a free gift for the acceptance of all who would accept it.

Let us not confound a *treaty of peace,* sealed between God and man, in the person and by the act of Christ, with the *gift of eternal life,* made over in Christ. They are quite distinct; and the latter is consequent on the former. And let us be careful against confounding *peace* with *salvation,* and *salvation* with *peace.* It is because peace has been established by Christ, as *God's* peace and as *man's* peace, that God can, in full exercise of his justice, as well as his clemency, bestow pardon, life, and salvation on man.

But our view of Christ's person will be still more definite, when we remember that he is spoken of in Holy Scripture as the "*second Man,*" (1 Cor. xv. 47); and also as the "*last Adam,*" (1 Cor. xv. 45). These terms are applied to Christ in direct contrast with the *first man*—the *first Adam.* Through this first man—this first Adam, came in the transgression; and the transgression brought in the enmity. The first Adam WAS MAN'S ENMITY against God. He was the *impersonation* of all creature-enmity. He was the "carnal mind" embodied; and the

"carnal mind *is* enmity against God." All the enmity against God, which we have ever felt in our hearts and in our flesh, has proceeded from that enmity — like scions from a root. The enmity which, after his fall, was the very *being,* or *mode of being* of the first Adam, had its seed within itself. It took root, grew, and bare fruit. We have gathered of that fruit. But the second man — the second Adam — the "Lord from heaven," manifest in human flesh—supplied a contrast. That "holy thing," born of a virgin mother, could not be *our enmity* too; and yet he must needs be something. Between enmity and peace there is no middle term; either enmity exists and prevails, or peace exists and prevails; and therefore, if the second man—the last Adam, could not be enmity, then of necessity he must be peace; and because *man, our* peace—*man's* peace, for the purpose of suffering and doing all that should be needful on man's part, for making peace on God's side available to the bringing of *life,* through Christ, into the souls of sinners—

reconciled sinners, yet "dead in trespasses and sins."

Having thus far seen that Christ is our peace, in respect to his person, let us proceed to show that he is so also by virtue of his *personal transactions*. It would do no violence to language if, in speaking of a person who had succeeded in his efforts to establish peace between two others who had been at enmity, we were to say that *he was their peace*—that he was in fact the power that had brought them together, and is the link that keeps them together. And we should associate with his success, the recollection of all he had done in order to ensure the success. We should then surely feel more and more the aptness of the expression—He *is* their peace. Now, let us follow out this idea.

It has been already stated, that peace on the side of the receiver of a wrong, is simply an act of clemency; but that peace on the side of the wrong-doer, must be a matter of humiliation, satisfaction, and right-doing. Christ's

personal transactions, as the second Adam, met God's clemency, by all these three particulars. *Humiliation,*—yes—"he humbled *himself;*"—he did not just submit to be *humbled,* but it was his own personal and deliberate act of humiliation;—"He humbled *himself,* and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philip. ii. 8.) And here, observe, this was not merely the humbling unto death of his own solitary person, but the humbling unto death of the *second man—of the last Adam,* who had taken upon himself, by imputation, the sin, (which was the cause of enmity) of the first man—of the first Adam and his posterity. It was, therefore, in effect, the humbling unto death, in Christ, of the *first man—of the first Adam and his posterity;* so that as soon as that humiliation was complete, so much of peace on Adam's side, —which was our side, was effected; and God's clemency towards us, the descendants of Adam, was so far embraced by Christ, as the second man—the last Adam.

But, *satisfaction* in the way of reparation was

equally neeessary, on the part of him who is "*our* peaee." And it does not diminish our sense of God's clemeney towards *us,* when we find him demanding full satisfaetion for our transgression from the *second man—the last Adam,* as our peace. We may now, perhaps, be able to diseern at onee the foree and value of that expression in Col. i. 19, 20—"It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having *made peace,* through the *blood of his cross,* by him to reconeile all things unto himself." The satisfaetion, therefore, made by him who is our peace, on the cross, was a complete aet—reaehing through all time, and to all the posterity of the first Adam; and by virtue of it, so mueh *more* of peaee on Adam's side, whieh is our side, was effeeted.

But we have also said that *right-doing* was equally neeessary on the part of him who is our peaee, in order to the full establishment of peace on both sides, so that God's justiee as well as his elemeney might be glorified. We turn, then, to the whole record—the biography of him who

is "our peace," and gaze with faith on the sinless perfection of his humanity, in which the sovereign will of the Father was supremely enthroned;—and to all the unwearied activity in holiness, by which he magnified the law, and made it honourable—showing it to be *practicable*, as well as *pleasant*;—in the light of which we may perceive the force of the prophetic epithet applied to him—"the Lord our Righteousness"—especially when we behold in him *that* righteousness "which is unto all and upon all who believe." It is called "the Righteousness of God;" not indeed as if it were a righteousness wrought out and manifested by the Divine, but by the human nature of Christ, proceeding from the power and sanctity of the law written on the fleshly tables of his heart. It was the *right-doing* of the *second man—of the last Adam*. It was his mastery over the *wrong-doing* of the *first Adam*. It was the bringing up of human nature to its primal capability, and power of righteousness. And thus, in the humiliation, satisfaction, and right-

doing, of the second Adam, we have the active proofs of his being "*our* peace;" and in the united effects of these three parts of the vast, mediatorial transaction, we behold a lasting peace, sealed and ratified between God and the second man—the last Adam, on behalf of the first Adam and his posterity. Christ is the connecting link; and because he is thus *our* peace, God can and does, most honourably, righteously, and bountifully, give—not peace merely, nor reconciliation merely, but *life eternal*—blessed, glorious life, to all who, believing the *ratification of peace*, will accept the life in all its grace and fulness. With this great truth before us, may we not now more fully enter into those words of St. John—"This is the record, that God *hath given* to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." (1 John v. 11, 12).

We have now before us the key to the voluminous treasure of truth contained in the text. May Christ's true people have grace to use it

to their souls' health and comfort. May the fulness of the peace flow down upon them.

And now, retiring within ourselves, and shutting out from our minds and hearts every thing but him "who is our peace," let us endeavour so to meditate, that, by the blessed Spirit's aid, we may be quickened in our approach to that precious feast, where he who is our peace now waits to receive and bless us.

Oh my soul, there is peace! The enmity is slain; and he who is thy peace binds thee and thy reconciled Father together in bonds over which neither time that wastes, nor the death which kills, can have power! Forth from him who is thy peace comes life—the life eternal—the well-head and spring of which are both in him. Open thyself wide, to receive all its fulness. Oh the enmity!—oh the enmity!—slain in Jesus, let it die in *thee;* it is nailed to his cross;—there let it hang, and writhe, and blacken, till it shall echo his words, and say, "It is finished." Ah my soul—the enmity shall say this; the serpent within thee shall say this.

Every dying lust and appetite shall say this. Spare it not, spare it not, oh my soul. Let the nail wound it more intensely; let the spear pierce it more deeply, till the dying shall be dead, and the triumph of the cross shall be manifested in *thee*: for "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Peace and *undying* corruptions, healthful spiritual life and *unmortified* sin, cannot subsist together. If thou knowest Jesus as thy peace, thou must know him also as the slayer of thine enmity.

Oh my soul, let thy every faculty expand to the full conception of what Christ is to *thee*. If it pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell, for the purpose of making peace by the blood of his cross, remember that fulness is for *thee*. Wouldst thou be content with emptiness, or with partial filling? Will less than the "fulness of God" satisfy thee? Oh wait on him, till the fulness overpower thee, if such may be. All is emptiness, but Christ;—none can fill thy vast capacity, but he!

Now, draw near—nearer to him; he loves thee—oh yes—loves thee! By the mystery of his holy incarnation; by his holy nativity and circumcision; by his baptism, fasting, and temptation; by his agony and bloody sweat; by his cross and passion; by his precious death and burial; by his glorious resurrection and ascension; by the coming of the Holy Ghost, he hath given proof—oh! what proof—that he loves thee! At the sacred feast, thou wilt find no enmity on God's part. No;—it is gone—gone for ever. If Christ is indeed thy peace *realized,* thou hast on thee the wedding garment, which is thy sole worthiness, in which thou wilt assuredly be accepted among the guests whom the King will honour. Thou wilt find joy and gladness; for love will be there, to embrace thee;—and grace will be there, to sustain thee;—and truth, to give thee assurance, in the presence of thy redeeming, justifying, and sanctifying God, who will hereafter be thy glory—the light of thy salvation and the strength of thy life.

PRAYER.

Oh God most merciful! Behold me prostrate before Thee,—a sinner without one plea, but that which Thou thyself hast graciously provided for me in the person and perfect sacrifice of Thy dear Son. Oh, is it not enough? God, thou knowest its sufficiency—yes, for the chief of sinners. Blessed Spirit, help me to urge it, in simple faith; and then, it will not fail. Though my sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Oh! most righteous and holy God, thou wast in Christ reconciling the world unto thyself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. That work of reconciliation is finished. The way of access to thee is open. The guiltiest may ap-

proach thee through it, and behold thee fully propitiated.

Jesus, Lord, thou art my peace; and apart from thee, there is no peace. Thou hast, in thy flesh, "abolished the enmity;" and hast come preaching peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh—to the Gentile and the Jew, that through thee, both might have access by one Spirit, to the Father. Graft me into thyself, by thy Spirit, that as thou art accepted of the Father, so I may be accepted in thee—the Beloved. Oh! make me feel and know that the enmity of my flesh is slain; and that thou art my peace, which no enmity can disturb; so shall my life, my death, my eternity, be peace.

Blessed Saviour—blessed Peace! I would know none other but thee. There is no other. The God of peace hath centred all his thoughts and purposes of peace in thee. So let me also do, by an unwavering faith, through thy Spirit.

Oh! thou my peace—draw me to thy sacred feast. There let me taste thy sweetness. There let me be refreshed, with the abundance of

peace, which is thine inexhaustible fulness. Satisfy my soul, and conform me to thyself; so that in this heart the Father's eye may trace nothing but the sanctity of that peace which passeth all understanding, whose full fruition shall be a holy rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God.

CHRIST OUR HOPE.

My soul hath long in darkness lain,
Shut out from God—estrang'd, alone;
For sin, with sorrow in its train,
Hath rear'd within my heart its throne.

And in this rebel flesh appears
No self-created confidence;
I dare not dry these bitter tears
By thoughts alone of penitence.

Hopeless I lie—till, through the gloom,
Some cheering ray of grace shall break;
Oh Saviour! from thy riven tomb,
Send forth that ray;—of mercy speak.

Ah! now I hear thee—now I see
My Hope, descending like a dove;
Thou *art my Hope!*—I cling to thee;
Despair is melted by thy love.

CHRIST OUR HOPE.

"The Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope."—1 Tim. i. 1.

If we know and possess Christ as our peace, we are prepared for a further and most important step in the Scriptural experience of the true Christian. The knowledge and possession of Christ as our peace, is a proof of the effectual work of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, whose office it is to receive of the things that are Christ's, and show them unto us. (John xvi. 14, 15). If the Comforter has brought us into possession of Christ as our peace, then has he brought us into a new and positive relation to God; and we are "begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"—and that hope "maketh not ashamed."

We are then entitled—yes, entitled to hope, even to the end, for the glory yet to be revealed in us. But our hope will be brighter and more steadfast, when once we know, and know that we possess, the *substance* of it. If the text affirms Christ to *be* our *hope*, then it expresses an essential quality of Christ, and of Christ *in us*. If the Apostle, in various Epistles, speaks of hope set up, and being active in the believing heart, he thereby refers to Christ and his mediatorial work, as the ground on which it rests, and as the spring which gives it activity. But this does not come up to the full intensity of the expression in the text. We may be "begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;" we may enjoy "patience of hope in our Lord Jesus;" we may have "a good hope through grace;" we may be "made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life," having "fled to lay hold on the hope set before us;" we may "abound in hope," and "rejoice in hope;" we may live "in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, pro-

mised before the world began;"—but still, the utmost meaning of such expressions goes only so far as to indicate how believers are acted on by that "hope which maketh not ashamed;"—that hope which is set up in the heart by the Holy Ghost, through the knowledge and belief of the truth.

A true evangelical hope cannot be a mere desire of something excellent, matured into a hope by a strong probability of its being realized. The end to which it looks, and the interests that are involved in it, are so great, so all-important, that it requires a solid foundation; not a probability, but an assurance;—an assurance arising out of some *transaction*—some *economy* that has power to draw after it the realization of the hope which it creates. Such a transaction is Christ's mediation; such an economy is the Gospel; and the assurance of their efficiency becomes at once a foundation on which the believing sinner rests, when beginning, as a guilty creature, to feel the pulsations of hope within—a hope that is full of

immortality. Still, all this may be a matter of actual experience, without our having once arisen to the inquiry, in what particular sense Christ himself *is* our hope; for it is one thing for Christ to be the ground or source of our hope, but quite another for him *to be the hope itself;* and it is the latter which the text affirms.

There are two texts, which may help us to perceive the true meaning of the expression that Christ "is our hope." In Heb. vii. 19, it is said —"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh to God." There is a little obscurity in this passage, as it stands in the translation, which is helped by the marginal reading. It is better thus: "The law made nothing perfect, but it was *the bringing in of a better hope;* by the which we draw nigh to God." The law, therefore, which could not justify, or "perfect" a sinner, was intended to symbolize Christ, in his real and effectual priesthood; and so to introduce *Him* as the harbinger of a better hope. The reference is evidently to Christ, in his per-

son and in his office. The other text is in Col. i. 27—"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." In the first, we contemplate Christ as the source and foundation of our hope; and in the second, as its fruition and substance. Upon the first of these two texts, let it be remarked, that when Christ came into the world to do that which the law could not do, he came in as our hope, with all the purposes of God's mercy towards us, depending on the reality and sufficiency of his atonement, as a priest. All, therefore, that man could hope for, as a means whereby he might draw nigh unto God, was in Him. He came into the world as the second Adam. The very fact of his so coming, implied a purpose of restitution and recovery. As soon as the first prophetic promise was felt in the heart of man, hope began to awaken, as it counted upon his coming to fulfil it. As soon as it was understood that the head of the serpent was to be bruised by the seed of the

woman, hope looked forth for the mighty seed who should come to do it. It was in this sense, that Abraham saw Christ's day afar off, rejoiced in it, and was glad. In the first Adam, by reason of the law, there was no hope for his posterity. He, in fact, was *their despair;* but never their hope. Had they not looked out of and away from him, they never could have hoped. The marks of the law's condemnation were on him; and reached down even to them and to their children; and while these marks were visible, there could be no hope. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Then, hope dawned upon the desolate posterity of the first Adam; because on the second Adam they saw no marks of the law's condemnation. But, was he not made under the law? Yes, truly; but in the way of obedience, and not in the way of personal guilt. He was under the law, that he might endure and obey it; and not that it might crush him. If he met the curse,

and exhausted its power, it was because he obeyed the curse. If he met the law's requirements by a steady and active compliance, it was because he obeyed the Divine mind revealed in the law. Thus the capabilities of the second Adam inspired hope; and his achievement made it active in the heart of man. A sufficient reason or ground of hopefulness was seen as soon as Christ was rightly and Scripturally apprehended. Hope there could be none, till the second Adam had, by satisfying justice, called down mercy. Both justice satisfied, and mercy active, were revealed in Christ. They were shown harmonising to one end, though they were qualities totally opposite. When Christ was born in Bethlehem, men felt that they might hope. And when they understood, as some did, that life was to spring forth out of death, they began to feel that the reign of hope was coming in, as they watched the progress of the second Adam's office, and listened to his marvellous sayings. But when the sealed tomb was riven, and gave up its dead, and the

second Adam came forth in the energy of an achieved life, then it was that the effulgence of hope was poured upon the guilty and the hopeless. The pinions of hope were never so strong as when they hovered over the empty grave, and when from its deep solitude there came forth a voice, saying: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

But the second text presents to us Christ, as the *fruition* and the *substance* of the hope thus awakened and called forth by the mediatorial office and work, which he fulfilled in the cradle, on the cross, and in the grave. It speaks to believers of Christ *in them* the hope of glory. Here then is language which plainly indicates an actual possession of Christ, by all his true people. He dwells in them by his Spirit. They are united to him; they are one with him, and he with them. The second Adam, with all his mediatorial triumphs, is implanted in the believing posterity of the first Adam; and they

are engrafted into him. Have they a sense of pardon? Then from him they derive it. Are they at peace with God? Then it is because he hath brought in the peace, and is their peace. Are they heirs of God? Then it is he who hath effected the relation, and secured the title of heirship, in and by himself. Are they endued with spiritual life? Then it is from him that it has flowed down upon them, and within them. Are they spiritually risen? Then they have risen with Christ. Have they hope, active and strong within them? Then Christ *is* that *hope:* because he is also their wisdom, their righteousness, their sanctification, and their redemption.

The more we are enabled to perceive of the personal relation of Christ to his church, and to each individual member of it, the more do we enter into the fact of his being the embodied reality of all that God has mercifully and graciously provided in him, for our recovery from the ruinous consequences of the fall. When we have learned what Christ has done for us, we

must go on to learn and experience what he *is to us, and in us,* by virtue of personal union and mutual indwelling. The richest enjoyments of the Christian state, are the fruits of such experience. We may draw great comfort from the assurance, that *through* Christ we have a good hope, that looks beyond the grave, and beholds the mercy-seat: but oh! how far more blessed to feel and know it, as a truth of God, that Christ *himself in us, is the substance of that hope;* that all he *is,* he is *for us;* in like manner as all he has done, has been done for us, and in our nature.

Now if we cannot clearly discern how Christ, as the second Adam, has linked himself to the posterity of the first Adam, we shall not clearly perceive how he *is* our hope. We may have very saving and very comforting views of Christ and his work of mediation, but we cannot go up to the full blessedness of that experience, which makes all the difference between a state of hopefulness *through* Christ, and a concentration of all hope *in* Christ.

Then let me draw attention to a few plain statements. The Lord Jesus identified himself with the posterity of the first Adam in all things, except their *indwelling corruption*. He identified himself so *really*, as that he could and did receive their sin upon himself, in the way of imputation, so that God might deal righteously *against* him, *as if a sinner*. Now two things stood in the way of man's hope, which Christ, as the second Adam, was to put away. The one of these two things was death, the penal consequence of the first Adam's sin. Till death should be overcome, man, as a sinner, could have no hope against death. The other thing was, the want of spiritual life, for man had forfeited life by sinning. Till life should be brought in, and its sources fully reopened, man, as a sinner, could have no hope of life. Christ then, as the second Adam, undertook to do, and actually did, these two things;—he "abolished death;" he "brought life and immortality to light." Remember, it was as the *second Adam*, that he did these two

things. He then was the death of that death which had forbidden sinful men to hope. He also was the source of that life, the announcement of which awakened and gave assurance to their hope. Thus the Apostle Paul declares, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam, all die; even so IN Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.) And further —"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 45—48.) And now, observe, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," (1 Cor. xv. 49) that is to say, as *in* the first Adam we were corrupt and subject to death, so *in* the second

Adam, we shall assuredly, and beyond doubt, as true believers, be eternally freed from corruption, and its consequent death, and invested with all the fulness, perpetuity, and blessedness of Christ's resurrection-life. In this sense, then, Christ is our death, and he is also our life. He is our death-conquering death, who by dying has "abolished" death. He is our life, by which, as believers, we are made spiritually alive unto God. It is by his life that we live. And thus, Christ has not only procured for us a *ground* of hope, that we may be hopeful, but he *is* our hope; —he *is* what we *hope to be in him eternally*, when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality." The first Adam *was our despair;* the second Adam *is our hope:* and what an exalted view does this present of the true believer's interest in Christ. What he is, as the second Adam, resting in the Father's complacent love, they shall be, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life; for his prayer when on earth was, "that they all may be one, even as thou Father, art

in me, and I in thee; that they all may be one in us; and the glory thou hast given me, (that is, as the second Adam,) I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou hast loved *them, as* thou hast loved *me*. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

In this view we trace the ample nature both of the remedy and restitution, which the free grace of God provided in the second Adam, for the believing posterity of the first. And if we believe it, then thus let us meditate:

"Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?" Oh life, where is thy fulness? Death's sting spent its venom; the grave exhausted its terrors; life pours out its fulness in our Immanuel. He is our hope. Death is under our feet;—life is in our souls, in him. Oh radiant

truth! Oh unfathomable mystery; not the less true because mysterious!

Hath Jesus, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, so loved thee as to become thy *death,* that he might be thy *hope;* and shall doubt invade the firm foundation on which he bids thee stand, for the full fruition of every hope embodied in him—brightly, assuredly, and most blessedly? Oh my soul—thine is a full cup of hope, for Jesus is its fulness. Out of him, and away from him, all is emptiness; there is no hope!

Oh my soul!—if thou hast indeed tasted and found that he is gracious, review thy Christian course, and his faithfulness. Be humbled at thy shortcomings,—not that thou mayest doubt, but rather that thy hope may expand and strengthen, by the contemplation of him who is thy hope. The fulness of Christ is the only bound which thy hope may recognise. Contemplate him as thou drawest near to his sacramental table, in contrition, faith, and love. There are the memorials—(blessed means of

grace) of that vast achievement, whereby he not only bade thee hope, but *became* thy hope, enduring and prevailing.

If there be any who have not Christ *in* them, the hope of glory, it is because they have not yet brought their guilt to the foot of his cross. They are "without hope, and without God in the world." They will not meditate, therefore, as believers do. It cannot be expected that they should. They have no due motive. But yet, may they not think and reflect? Immortal beings! may they not this day begin to say within themselves—oh, my soul—art thou without hope, because without Christ? Art thou content? Art thou wise? Art thou what thou wouldest wish to be, when Christ shall appear? Are sin, death, life, eternity, hell, heaven,—trifles? If hitherto they have awakened no concern within thee, is it not time they should? One thought, such as these, may, by the blessed Spirit's aid, cause the first awakening—by which sinners may be induced to turn to the hope set before them, and find it full of immortality and bliss.

PRAYER.

Oh my offended God! how could I look up to thee, but through the intervention of Him whom thou hast exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins! My in-bred sin, no less than my myriad sins of omission and commission, when viewed in the light of thy holy Word, might well shut me up in the darkness of despair. But, blessed be thy name, there is hope for the most hopeless of the children of men. Thou didst kindle a light of blessed hope, when Thou declaredst that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Thou didst set it forth in types and shadows, in thy Sacred Word; and now, it shines forth in rich effulgence from the risen body of thy once crucified, but now living Son, who, as our Great High Priest, "ever liveth to make intercession for us." Oh my God! guilty

—guilty though I am, yet I will not despair. Why should I? Thou art faithful. Jesus is sufficient to dispel the darkest cloud that sin ever cast upon the human soul.

Oh Jesus—Immanuel—my Hope! I cast myself wholly upon thee. Not only dost Thou make me hopeful, but Thou art Hope within me. Make my union with Thee more perfect, by filling me more with Thine own Spirit—the Comforter. Lord, I will not doubt Thee, though my heart, sometimes faint through sin, will tremble. For ever let me hear Thy soothing voice within me; and when I walk upon the troubled waters, shuddering at the depths beneath, stretch out Thy faithful hand, and brace my faltering heart. Help—help mine unbelief; and then, leaning on Thine everlasting arm, I will go serenely forward. Thy sacred table is radiant of hope. Thither let me go, with a child's simplicity of purpose. There Thou waitest for the hopeful and the loving. There Thou droppest the dews of Thy grace. There thy banner over me shall be love.

CHRIST OUR WAY.

Oh, firm as adamant, the bar
That shut me out from God!
Distant and dark, I gaz'd from far,
And trembled at his rod.

But when I heard the anguish-cries
Of Him who died for me,
I upward look'd, with streaming eyes,
And saw the way was free.

Jesus, *my way!* through thee I come
Rejoicing to the throne
Of him, who shows me there a home,
Provided by his Son.

Oft have I come; and, as before,
Embolden'd by thy grace,
I'll share thy precious feast once more,
And see my Father's face.

CHRIST OUR WAY.

"I AM THE WAY."—John xiv. 6.

THE access of a sinner to God must have its origin in a Divine purpose, and must be the product of sovereign grace alone. The uniform teaching of holy Scripture is substantially this. The first advent in the flesh, of the Lord Jesus Christ, was the manifestation of a Divine purpose. The working out of his mediatorial office was the accomplishment of that purpose. The application of Christ and his finished work, to the soul of a sinner, is the exhibition of the sovereign grace. The access of the sinner to God, in and through Christ, is its fruition. Plainly then, the whole purpose, means, and end of the sinner's privileged state and relation to God, are irrespective of, and altogether out of

himself: as much as the origin of his being was out of, and irrespective of himself. Through Christ Jesus, God deals with the sinner, *as such*. The purpose of God was directed towards him as a sinner. The work of Christ, and the sufferings of Christ, as mediator, were wrought out and endured for him, as a sinner. And the free grace of God, by the Spirit, applying Christ and his finished work, is bestowed on him, as a sinner. It is as a sinner, therefore, that man can ever be a candidate for, and a recipient of the results of the purpose, means, and free grace of God. And now, bearing in mind these great and permanent truths, we turn to the brief but voluminous words of the text.

It is plain, from the conclusion of the verse, that our Lord uses the expression concerning himself, in a single and unmixed sense; intimating thereby, as is elsewhere abundantly taught in holy Scripture, that he is the sole way or medium of access, by which sinners, alienated from God, and dead in trespasses and sins, may return to him and live. And here remark,

Christ does not merely declare that he has opened a way of access, but that he *is himself* the way;—even as he is declared to be our peace, our hope, and our life.

There are many who are, no doubt, clear in their perception of Christ as a mediator who has opened a way of access to God for sinners, but who, perhaps, need to be informed how he is *himself* the way; and certain it is, that the more we are enabled to identify Christ in his person and offices, as the concentrated revelation of God's mercy, compassion, and love, the more we shall be inclined to rest our every hope on him alone; and the more thoroughly shall we perceive the importance of vital union with him by faith, through the Spirit.

A very moderate amount of reflection may serve to convince us, that the way of access to God, for sinners, must be such as shall render it, not only a merciful, but a righteous thing, (according to the law) on the part of God, to admit them to his presence and favour, on the ground of reconciliation. If man as a sinner,

could, by a sustained effort at well-doing, have aimed at reconciling himself to God, it might have been a *merciful*, but yet not a *righteous* thing, on the part of God, to have admitted him to favour. But if, by any means, such as the full vindication of the law,—the reconciliation of God and sinners could be so justly and righteously effected, as that the acceptance of such reconciliation, on man's part, could so operate, as to establish friendship between him and God, then it would manifestly be both righteous and merciful, on the part of God, to recognise such friendship, and to put upon it the seal of perpetuity.

This, then, is precisely what is revealed in the Gospel plan of salvation. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses to them." The primary step in the way of reconciliation was on God's part. The incarnation of Christ was the manifest commencement of it. His death, resurrection and ascension, were its manifest completion. The closing, then, of Christ's first

advent, was both the righteous and merciful establishment of an act of reconciliation on God's part, towards the guilty race of the first Adam. Ever since the ascension of Christ, the great Gospel message has consisted of the news of reconciliation—the declaration, on God's part, that no hindrance lay between him and the immediate return to him of the guiltiest sinner. Nothing short of this could have been good news, or Gospel, to a lost sinner. It would not be good news to a sinner, if he were now told that, through the transaction of Christ on the cross and in the grave, God would eventually be reconciled, on the performance of some matter of previous condition on the part of man,—such as repenting, believing, and amending his evil life;—for he would feel that such a condition is precisely that which his fallen and corrupted nature cannot by any means perform; and that therefore he and God must for ever continue unreconciled. But, to be told that, through the transaction of Christ, God had actually reconciled the world unto himself,

and that the reconciliation consisted simply in not imputing sin to the guilty, would, as soon as steadfastly believed by a sinner, go very far towards filling him with the assurance that he might, with the Spirit's aid, at once return to God, with a certainty of gracious acceptance, which should result in the fact of his full acceptance and complete salvation. The sinner would then perceive that a way of access to God was actually *opened*—and *open* for him; and he would conclude that God really *intended* he should return to him and live. He would moreover, if rightly instructed, begin at the same time to perceive, that return to God would not depend upon any *fitness* of character, on his part, but on the amplitude of God's provision in Christ, and the harmonization of his justice and his mercy, in their several operations.

Now, let this be steadily borne in mind. It is not the possession of a newness of character, such as is implied by repentance, faith, and amendment of life, that can give a sinner access to God. The only access is by virtue of God's

reconciliation of the guilty to himself—while guilty, and before repentance, faith, and amendment have appeared. That reconciliation consists, as we have seen, in the non-imputation of sin; and, if God does not impute sin to the guilty, what should stand in the way of immediate return to God, as soon as the sinner believes that God has thus effected reconciliation?

But, here an inquiry may be urged—Is it according to the revealed truth of God, to say that God has ceased to impute their trespasses to sinful men, *before* they have repented and believed? Our answer is in the affirmative—and without the smallest qualification; and we add that, if the non-imputation of sin is to depend upon repentance, faith, and amendment, then repentance, faith, and amendment must be regarded as *conditions*—the performance of which is to lay the ground of a claim to the favour of God. In other words, man, in that case, would gain *for himself* access to God. But such doctrine is not anywhere to be found in the Bible. To maintain such doctrine, were to

deny the completeness and efficiency of Christ's mediatorial work. The Gospel is a *remedy for sin,* and a destroyer of the penal consequences of sin. As such, it is the fruit of Christ's finished work—which is reconciliation on the part of God. And, I repeat, it is simply because God has thus reconciled the world to himself by Christ, that there is a way of access opened, and still open for us; and whosoever enters it, by faith in Christ, becomes the friend of God—no longer an alien and an enemy; no longer dead in trespasses and sins, but alive unto God. If the non-imputation of sin were the *effect* of our *faith,* then faith would be the good work that would justify us. But our justification is altogether of grace, and not of works; and therefore, the non-imputation of sin is the product of Christ's work on our behalf.

Thus far, then, we see that Christ has *opened* a way of access to God for us, by rendering it a righteous and a consistent thing in God to cease to impute sin to the guilty, just as it would be a righteous thing in me to accept an insolvent

debtor to my favour, as soon as I had, for sufficient reasons, resolved no longer to charge his debt against him. But the fact of Christ having opened a way of access, does not come up to the full sense of the expression—"I *am* the way." Let us now go up to the full sense: and first, observe, that so long as God imputes sin to a sinner, and actually charges it upon him, the sin lies as an impassable barrier, and cuts off the sinner's access to God. There is no *way* of access. The imputed sin is the way of *hindrance.* Now, when Jesus, as the last Adam, undertook the work of mediation, he took *upon himself,* by direct and positive *imputation,* the sin which hindered the sinner's access to God. In order that God might no longer impute the sin to the posterity of the first Adam, he laid it, with all its guilt and consequences, upon Jesus—the last Adam. In Him, the sin met its full expiation. And being expiated, it could not be retained and so charged against the sinner. Christ, then, was the Lamb of God who took away—took *on himself* for the *purpose* of *taking*

away, the sin of the world. "He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." In Christ's person, then, there is presented to us the actual removal of that which would for ever have cut off our access to God. In this strict and accurate sense, then, he *is* the way. The fact of his having removed the way of hindrance, is the fact which makes him the way of access to God, for sinners.

Next observe, that Christ as Mediator, did, by his own merits, obtain access to God, after having removed the hindrance. Had not Christ been able, by the sacrifice of himself, to put away the sin imputed to him, he never could have entered into the most holy place, as the great "High Priest of our profession." But he was able—and he did it; just as, under the law, the high priest was wont to make a ceremonial expiation of sin by a suitable sacrifice; and having actually made it, (and so, in a ceremonial manner, put away sin), he entered into the holy place, with the blood of atonement; and

the work of ceremonial reconciliation was complete. The high priest under the law, *was* really *the way* by which the Jewish people had ceremonial access to God, *after* the expiation of sin; for none but the high priest could enter there in person; but *his* entrance was *their* entrance. Now in Christ, our great High Priest, we have the realisation of all that was symbolised by the ceremonies of the law;—of that law which had "the shadow of good things to come." What the high priest and his atonement were, ceremonially, such Christ and his atonement are, really and substantially. So then, as the Jewish people had access to God ceremonially, through the high priest, *as their way*, so is access really offered in all gratuitous freeness to us, miserable sinners, through Jesus as *our* way; for he said, "no man cometh to the Father but by me."

If this simple, but greatly overlooked Scripture truth, now stands clearly out before you, so that you perceive the concentration, in Christ, of the justice and mercy of God, on your behalf,

then you will also perceive, that union with Christ, by faith through the Spirit, is the step which brings the sinner at once into the presence and favour of God, as a reconciling God, whose name is love. It is in order to this step, then, that the sinner must at once seek for the needful and promised grace, not for a moment dreading that he has to do with a God *at enmity with him.* And surely, while striving, he may take the largest encouragement from that precious text, in Heb. x. 19, &c.—"Having therefore, brethren, boldness (or liberty) to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated (or, *new-made*) for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

With a truth so clear, so simple, and so all-essential before us; with a doctrine so exactly adapted to our necessity as sinners, surely the

utmost encouragement is afforded to the sin-burthened rebel, to look to the incarnate Son of God; and in him behold the way to a loving Father freely opened,—without one hindrance on His part, interposing. Then thus let us meditate:—Oh my soul! be mindful how thou regardest the precious token of a Father's compassion, and an elder Brother's love! Thy sin might have shut thee out for ever from the Divine presence: but now in Christ, there is a way of access, which is for *thee*. It is for thee—it is *thine*, if thou wilt enter it. If thou reject it, think what it is that thou rejectest. It is a way open for thee *now*—a way, at the very entrance of which, lies mercy awaiting thee, and love to greet thee; and at the end, glory to make thee illustrious. It is the way by which patriarchs and prophets, evangelists and apostles, saints and martyrs, have entered into their rest; and in which they are awaiting their final beatitude in the resurrection-triumph of Jesus. There is no other way. Pride, self-righteousness, philosophy, have sought to set up and

establish other ways. But there is no other. No man cometh to the Father but by Christ, because he alone, by bearing away sin, hath made return to God *possible;* and, by effectual faith in him, *certain.* If thou art not enjoying full access to God in Christ, then thou art wretched indeed! The legions of immortal men who have perished without hope, and are now lifting up their eyes in torments, perished because they despised and rejected that way. Oh beware—beware!

But, oh my soul! if thou hast indeed entered —if thou hast realized free access to God, and enjoyed the sweetness of reconciliation, and the tenderness of his paternal love, give all the glory to Christ, and stand on him as thy foundation, till the shadows of time shall give place to the realities of eternity. And day by day, in the use of means—and now, especially in the use of his own blessed sacramental-means—seek for that increase of grace, that shall heighten the bliss of thy present communion with God in Christ, and promote thy meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

PRAYER.

Infinitely separated from thee by sin, most righteous Jehovah, I weep with joy to think, to believe, to know—that the gulf is not impassable. There is a living way—a way consecrated—a safe and only way, on which my soul, lost in itself, may upward go into thy very presence, accepted, healed, and beautified. That way has been wrought out by travail, and is marked with blood; not my travail—not my blood. No, thou just and merciful God! No, thou compassionate Lord Jesus! The travail was that of a sinless humanity, created under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we (the lost posterity of the first Adam) might receive the adoption of sons. The blood was that of God manifest in human flesh. Oh

blessed, consecrated, precious, all-effectual way! Let this be mine, and none other.

Jesus, Lord, Master, thou art my way! In thee, I enjoy access to the Father. Oh! hold me fast, and keep me steady in the way. Let nothing allure me from thee. Let nothing ever affright me. Keep me, like Mary, at thy feet; or, like John, reclining on thy bosom. Whom have I, but thee? To whom shall I turn, but unto thee? What can satisfy me, but thyself? Out of thee, I could not look up towards a holy God. In thee, I behold him; and to me, his name is love. He who hath seen thee, hath seen the Father. What thou art to me, he will ever be. Oh, keep me humble, while thou makest me happy, holy, and rejoicing.

Show me the preciousness of thy blood, and the efficacy of the travail of thy soul, when I meet thee at thy sacramental table; and though the "accuser" may trouble me on account of sins pardoned and foregone, let thy sustaining Spirit tell my inmost soul, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

CHRIST THE TRUTH.

Oh, never did the Truth engage
My wayward heart, till forth it shone
Effulgent from the sacred page,
By God's own ministry alone.

I never knew its depth or height,
Till the incarnate, mighty Word
Stood out, array'd in glorious light,
Reveal'd, confess'd, and inly heard.

But now, within my heart He lives,
My Truth—expanding day by day;
In Him my heavenly Father gives
Joy that can never melt away.

Jesus—*my Truth!*—Thy light shall guide
My erring soul along the road,
Where, but for thee, my steps would slide
Beneath temptation's heavy load.

CHRIST THE TRUTH.

"I AM THE TRUTH."—John xiv. 6.

TRUTH and error, shadow and substance, are variously presented to the minds of men. Truth, in order to be influential, must be definitely apprehended; or else error, fallacy, shadow, will usurp the place which substantially it should occupy. God's truth, is truth in its supremacy. It can be apprehended in only one way, and that is in Christ, who declares himself to be *"The Truth:"* and I wish the definiteness of that remarkable expression to be clearly perceived, in its application to the incarnate Son of God—the Eternal "Word."

To say that Christ—God manifest in the flesh, was and is in possession of all truth, would be only to assert that which no one believing in

Him would be prepared to dispute, or disposed to question. The office of the Only Begotten (who from eternity was in the bosom of the Father) was to declare or manifest the Father; and therefore was he privy to the whole truth of the Father. When, therefore, our Lord affirmed, "I *am* the truth," he plainly meant something more than that he was in *possession* of the truth.

Moreover, to say that Christ always spake the truth—the truth of God, without any admixture of error, would be only to say that his sinless humanity obeyed its proper bias, and maintained its proper character and consisteney. It is, therefore, equally plain that our Lord meant something more than this when he affirmed, "I am the truth." It is one thing to possess and speak the truth; but quite another thing to *be* the truth itself.

Still further, to say that Christ *is truth*, would be just tantamount to saying that, as to his Divine nature, the essential of Godhead was within him—a matter of fact probable in a great

variety of ways; a matter of fact credible—yea, always believed by every true disciple of Christ. It is, therefore, plain that he meant something more than this, when he affirmed, "I am the truth." To possess, to speak, and to be truth, is a lofty privilege; and this was indeed the privilege of Jesus—God manifest in the flesh; yet it was not of this privilege that he was speaking, in the words of the text. He was in fact announcing himself in his true mediatorial character; not as *truth*, but as THE truth. Truth, though but one thing essentially, yet takes a great variety of aspects. Christ might have rightly called himself truth, in regard to truth philosophical, or in regard to truth moral, or physical, truth latent or demonstrated; but in that case, he would not have called himself "*the* truth." But we observe, it was of *himself* as *the* truth, that he spake; and the term is one of most definite designation.

The proper key to this peculiar expression is found in John i. 17, where it is said: "The

law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Most thoughtful readers of the Bible have, no doubt, felt some obscurity in the wording of our English translation of this verse. The obscurity may, perhaps, be removed by a paraphrase; thus—The law which *cannot justify,* but must condemn the sinner, (for by it is the knowledge of sin, and through it, the vengeance due to sin)—that law was given by God to man, through Moses—that is by his instrumentality; but grace and truth, which *can justify* the sinner, which were intended so to do, and which cannot condemn, came into full exercise, on behalf of man, through Christ—God manifest in human flesh. Here you observe the person of Moses, and the person of Christ, put in contrast. The law was given in the person of Moses. Grace and truth came in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus then, while Moses in person represented the law, Christ in person was really the grace and *the truth.* The apostle Paul has, by a bold figure of speech, gone quite up to what I mean,

when writing to the Corinthians about the Jews, and saying—"But even unto this day, when *Moses* is read, the veil is upon their heart;" meaning thereby that the law, personated by the name of Moses, was read; and embracing in the one expression both the moral and ceremonial law.

But, in order to the better understanding of our Lord's declaration, "I am the truth," let it be remarked, that though we commonly use the term *truth*, in simple opposition to the term *error*, because they express the ideas of qualities that are opposite, yet we are not limited to that usage; for it is almost as usual, and is as well understood, when by use of the term *truth*, we mean *reality*,—the reality of a thing, as contrasted with the *representation*, the *shadow* or *picture* of the thing. And we find expressions equivalent to this, in the writings of St. Paul; for instance, in Heb. x. 1, where the apostle says, "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which

they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect." In this case, the law shadowed forth something that thereafter was, in reality and in substance, to be evolved. What the law thus shadowed forth, was, *when* evolved, *the truth,*—that is, the *reality*. And this *truth* was *Christ;* and the new dispensation,—the gospel, all concentrated in his person. This was what elsewhere is called "*the truth as it is in Jesus*"—the aggregate of God's gracious purposes of mercy and love, to be fully developed in and by him. And this you perceive was very much more than Christ *possessing* the truth of God, and *speaking* the truth of God, and being truth in the *abstract*. *The* truth, in the evangelical sense of the expression, could be nothing less than God's manifestation of himself in Christ. In Christ's person, the truth concerning redemption and salvation was embodied,—made visible—audible—influential, to the full extent of the end proposed. In him, all the law's types found their antitypes, that is, their realization. In him, all the law's shadowings forth presented their substance

and their reality. Metaphors and figures, and symbols, in him became living verities. Moses and the prophets foretold of him; and in the fulness of time he appeared, made of a woman, made under the law. He was the manifested truth, or *substance of all revelation,* and therefore the manifestation of God; so that in him, men of all nations and kindreds of the earth might eventually *behold* the salvation of God. Christ, then, *was the truth,* in order that he might dispense it, by dispensing *himself.* When he lay in the manger of Bethlehem, he was the truth evolved. During his three years' ministry, he was the living, speaking, acting, influential truth, striking the foundation of error, and preparing to establish truth's supremacy. When he died on the cross, he was developing the power of the truth against him who had the power of sin, and therefore of death: and when he rose from the grave, he declared the full and perfect triumph of *the truth* over all that had ever crossed the path of man with a fearful destiny. In him, *the truth* crushed sin, abolished death, and

opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. In him, *the truth* was not merely a principle, but a principle *animated* and *personated;* a principle that moved, and felt, and spake, and suffered, and acted *as a man,* on whose nature sin had made no ravages. His sympathies were the sympathies of the truth; his death was the endurance of the truth; his resurrection-life was and is the fruit of the truth. His obedience was all along the obedience of the truth yielded to truth. And if his mediatorial office, perfectly sustained and fulfilled, is to avail us sinners anything, it is because he as the truth,—*the truth triumphant,* is the grand centre in which the purposes of a God of truth will have all their fulfilment and completeness.

Thus then, we may be enabled clearly to perceive the definiteness of the expression, "I am the truth," when used by Christ, in direct and exclusive reference to himself, in his mediatorial office and character; and we may, in the same light, perceive the exalted and august nature of that wondrous Being who came to make us *par-*

takers of the truth, by being made partakers of himself, through the Spirit—living members of his glorious body.

All that we, as sinners, can need, is therefore treasured up and to be found in Christ; because all the truth of God concerning us has been *manifested* in him—manifested in order that it might be dispensed;—dispensed, in order that it might be possessed by us. He, therefore, who possesses Christ, possesses the truth of God; and that truth takes many forms—mercy, pardon, peace, light, life, love, salvation, glory;—all these are streams flowing from one fountain, and that fountain is—God manifest in human flesh.

In the compass of these condensed sacramental exercises, we may not venture on any more minute or expository view of this great subject. Details may, however, be now advantageously sought in the written Word, to show how the truth in Christ was an achieving power—an enduring submissiveness—a triumphing perfection—a God-manifesting endowment; but I must forbear; and leave it to your prayerful reflection in soli-

tude, to trace out the particulars to which I trust the key has been thus afforded; only suggesting that Christ, as the truth, must be the foundation on which alone you can stand, as candidates for salvation; the only ground of a hope that can shed its brightness beyond the dark shadows of the valley of death. Philosophy has its truth; science, art, nature, all have theirs; arithmetical process declares truth, and mathematical force demonstrates it; but let them do their utmost, and *the* truth which saves, emancipates, and glorifies the soul and body of immortal man, must for ever be an unsolved problem to the misguided one, who finds it not, who seeks it not, who cares not for it, as brought down from heaven to earth in the person of Jesus, the eternal Son of God.

And now let us ask—Do we feel these things? Have new thoughts been suggested,—new hopes enkindled? Then, thus let us meditate. Oh, my soul, what is truth in any form worth, to an immortal being, unless it be that which thou canst embrace, when enabled by the Spirit to

say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." All truth, short of the truth as it is in Jesus, will one day, oh how soon—cease to be truth to thee! Couldst thou fathom the truth as it lies hid in the heart of every mysterious thing, and reduce the philosophy of truth to a simple alphabet of fixed science, why—an accident, an hour's fever, some malady that mocks the physician, might sweep the record away for ever. Alas! what bankruptcy, after a life of toil and demonstration. Oh, my soul, Christ must be *thy* truth, as well as *the* truth to thee. Thou must have a living interest in him, if thou wouldst escape the delusion of shadows, and stand when everything but God's Word, as developed in him, shall be falling in ruins. All that is great and glorious in this world, however true—its pride, its pomp, its sovereignty, its wealth, its skill, its ingenuity of art, the fruits of conquest and the achievements of peace,—all shall pass away; God's truth in Christ alone shall remain; and that will be the power, in the exercise of which will be seen the fulfilment of the divine

declaration, "Beloved, I make all things new."

Oh! my soul, my soul,—to possess the universe during the poor span of human existence, and to be destitute of Christ as thy truth, were to be poor below all estimate. Therefore, seek thou Christ. Love truth, when and wheresoever she presenteth herself to thee, and in whatsoever aspect arrayed. Seek her; she will honour thee. But, as an immortal being, seek *the truth as it is in Jesus,* before all other truth. It will not only honour thee here, among those who share it with thee, but it will set thee among princes, and lift thee beyond the stars, in the presence of thy Father which is in heaven.

Shall Jesus, as the truth, be set forth among men, still despised, still rejected? Alas—alas! for them. My soul, enter not into their counsels; but, in the blaze of revelation which shines around thee, apprehend Christ revealed to thee as *thy truth;* and so,—dying thou shalt live, and living thou shalt rejoice; and thy rejoicing spirit shall carry, in its anthems, rich praises to the footstool of thy redeeming God.

PRAYER.

Oh heavenly Father—God of all grace;—thou knowest me to be a creature born in sin, and therefore encompassed with error, delusion, and uncertainty; and, in great compassion to my many wants, hast set forth truth and certainty by a full revelation of thyself in thy dear Son. In thy holy Word thou dost reflect, as by a mirror, thy divine perfections, manifesting them in him who took our nature into his Godhead, that he might be our truth—*Thyself* in us. I adore and magnify thy holy name for this surpassing act of grace and goodness; and I pray thee that thy blessed Spirit, with illuminating power, may enable me to perceive the truth in its fulness, by beholding it in Jesus; by beholding and receiving him as "the truth,"—thy truth and mine. I would lie humbly and teachably, like a

child, before thy throne of grace; and would have the pride of reason, and the power of will, brought entirely in subjection—loving, adoring subjection, to thy truth. This is all possible, if thou wilt take me in thy gracious hands. And surely I ought not to doubt thy willingness or thy love, since thou hast so revealed thyself in Jesus, as the truth. Oh, I will not doubt; but will open my heart freely, and give up the power of my intellect to thy teaching and guidance.

Jesus! Redeemer! thou art the truth *for me*. Whether I have received thee fully or not, yet thou art for me. I would receive thee at once and altogether, by faith, through the Holy Ghost; and I would live before God the Father, and before men like myself, in the power of truth, which is thyself. Oh, fill me, furnish me with an inexhaustible supply; and let my spiritual life be the manifestation of the truth, in its constraining power, unto holiness of heart and life.

In thee, my truth, I come to thy sacramental table. There, give me increase of thyself, and

of every grace that flows from thee. Worthless and vile in myself, I come; but—accepted and acceptable in and through thee, who art my worthiness, I cease to tremble, because I have learned to believe, to love, and to adore thee. Amen.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

I *dream'd* of Life while I was dead in sin,
But all avail'd not—for the Death remain'd;
I *strove* the sunny hill of Life to win,
But Death repuls'd me ere the height was gain'd.

I *long'd* for Life—rejoicing in the thought
That it might come like waters gushing near;
Yet,—whence I knew not, till my spirit caught
The voice of revelation, full and clear.

Then—then I *pray'd* for Life, and forth it broke
In blessed fulness from my Saviour's grave;
Death cower'd—and put aside his dreadful yoke,
And freedom beautified the abject slave.

Jesus—my Life!—by whom alone I live,
Grafted and growing in thee let me be;
Give all thou canst of grace—for ever give,
And make me yield the fruits of Life—to thee.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

"CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE."—Col. iii. 4.

A STATE of death in trespasses and sins, is the awful calamity which has overtaken the whole posterity of the first and fallen Adam; and in man's nature there is no power of recovery or self-restitution. The life by which alone he can live unto God, lies altogether out of himself. If we possess it not, we are of all creatures most miserable. The Gospel is a provision of life in Christ, for the dead in trespasses and sins.

I wish, therefore, to make clear two things: first, in what sense Christ is *life;* and secondly, how he comes to be *our* life, or life in us.

If we contemplate the Divine nature, or Godhead of Christ, the first simple idea that suggests itself is, that, essentially, he must be

life—not as possessing a derived existence, but as self-existent. The incommunicable name, "Jehovah," signifies this—that the being who is God, is essential life; and, therefore, in and of himself, is the source of all life. Hence, in reference to Christ's Divine nature, St. John declared—"In him was life." Now John was a Jew writing for the instruction of Jews, to show them that Jesus of Nazareth was very God, without which, a narrative of his life and death as a man, would not have availed anything. He therefore adapted his expression to the Jewish mode of thinking; and his statement is equivalent to this—In him was *Jehovah*, that is, essential life, or self-existence. The belief of that fact would necessarily draw after it the belief of his true Messiahship. St. John, therefore, prefaced his gospel by declaring, that Jesus of Nazareth was actually Jehovah. This the Jews in general could not, and at present, cannot believe; and by them therefore, with comparatively few exceptions, Christ and his claim to be the true Messiah have been, and still are,

rejected. But the Christian faith is based upon that fact; and if we do not thoroughly believe that Christ is essential life, and therefore God, his mediation avails us nothing.

But the declaration that Christ is life, or our life, is not limited to his Divine nature, but extends to his whole mediatorial person—God manifest in the flesh. In the human nature of the Lord Jesus, there is also life. It is not essential life, such as he possesses as God; but a derived life, which he possesses as Mediator—the bestowal of God the Father: for "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son (that is, to his human nature) to have life in himself." The efficiency of Christ's mediation very much depended on the fact, that the nature of man which he assumed in order to redeem it, was invested by God the Father with an indestructible life; a life, which, indeed, admitted of suspension, so far as the human body was concerned, but was sure of restoration; in regard to which he himself asserted that he had power to lay it down, and equal power to take it

again. The human nature which he assumed had, at the beginning, been created with the same reality and fulness of life which Christ's nature possessed; and held it by the tenure of obedience. The loss of it, then, was the consequence of disobedience. When man sinned, the tenure was destroyed; and subjection to death ensued. St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, while arguing out the efficiency of Christ's priesthood, in contrast with the priesthood under the law, which (by reason of death) continued not in any *one man* holding the office of high priest, placed the priesthood of Christ in this pre-eminent point of view, that he "was made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but *after the power of an endless life:*" so that, possessing in himself an endless life, which rendered succession impossible, the whole priesthood of the New Testament must, of necessity, be concentrated in him. It was then by virtue of that *power*, which the possession of an endless life conferred on him as Mediator, that Christ alone could be, and is, the great High Priest of our

profession, whose one atonement avails for all purposes, and reaches to all time.

Bearing this steadily in mind, let us go on to observe, that in regard to his human nature, Christ came as the second man, or the last Adam, (as he is also termed) to be the one Mediator between God and man; and, "by the power of an endless life" conferred on his human nature, came also to assume and execute the office of a mediating priest, whose office and sacrifice should effect that which the priesthood and sacrifices of the law could not possibly accomplish, except in a ceremonial and symbolical manner. Now, it appears that God the Father gave the "*man, Christ Jesus,*" to have life in himself, upon precisely the same tenure as that by which it was conferred on Adam at the first, when he was made "in the image of God." We have already said, that that tenure was *obedience*. And perhaps the epithets "the second man," and "the last Adam," as applied to Christ, are intended to direct attention to this important truth. If Christ came on earth

as a man; if he came as the last Adam, and therefore, as to his human nature, as a created being, in subjection and loyalty to God the Father—he came that he might obey. And if, as a living man, he came with the power of an endless life, such as the first Adam originally possessed, and, in like manner, by the donation of God, then manifestly he held that life by the tenure of obedience. If Christ, then, as the last Adam, had not obeyed thoroughly, and in every sense, he would not have laid down his life and taken it again, but he would have *lost* it, as the first Adam did; and that would have been the penal consequence of disobedience, in the one case as well as in the other.

The tenure of obedience, by which the first Adam held the power of an endless life with which the sovereignty of God invested him, had reference to the known will of God. That law which said "thou shalt not," was simply *restrictive*, and implied that Adam's nature, then sinless and unimpaired, would, as by an instinct, be ever active and progressive in obeying,

according to the knowledge which it possessed. But the tenure of obedience by which Christ, the last Adam, received the power of an endless life, reached to two particulars: he was to obey the curse, so as to exhaust it;—he was to obey the whole law, so as to magnify it. This he was to do, as the last Adam; and in order that he might, as the result of his interposition, make it a just, though no less merciful a transaction on the part of the Father, to restore the power of an endless life to the first Adam and his posterity, whose lack of obedience to a Divine restriction had worked the forfeiture of life, by destroying the tenure on which its continuation depended.

Now the history of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, is just a history of the obedience of the last Adam,—the tenure upon which his power of an endless life was sustained; and the proof, therefore, that his mediation has been effectual to the restoring to man's nature, by obedience, what that nature had forfeited through disobedience. Now a clear perception of this foundation truth must,

by the blessing of God upon it, help greatly to establish the assurance which an inquiring sinner needs, that Christ, as the last Adam, has effectually, and in himself, provided the infallible means, whereby the guiltiest child of the disobedient first Adam, may, if he will, be reinstated in the favour of God, and be himself invested with the power of an endless life, on the tenure of free grace, to be manifested by the filial obedience of a child, who knows that his best portion is his heavenly Father's love.

Let it, in the next place, be now seen, how Christ comes to be *our* life. That he has life in himself, and is essentially life, is plain. But, is the life which he has in himself, communicable? Surely. But, can Christ really become our life? Doubtless. He himself declared, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." This answers the first inquiry. He also said, "I am the resurrection and the life." This answers the second. It follows, then, that Christ himself is the very thing which he bestows, when

we are made spiritually alive in and through him. And to this the apostle refers, when he says, "And you hath he quickened," (that is, invested with the power of an endless life) "who were dead in trespasses and sins." This, in fact, is the reality of the Christian state. It begins here; all that follows is the expansion of it. St. John meant the same thing, when he said, "this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life," (which is the power of an endless life,) "and this life is in his Son." Out of Christ, then, a sinner is in the same state as the first Adam, when he had forfeited the tenure of an endless life, by disobedience. Death has taken the place of life in him; and what he needs, is to have the endless life restored to him. *In* Christ, then, he experiences that restoration; and in Christ, therefore, he is invested with the same endless life, that Christ, the last Adam, possesses; because, as the disobedience of the first Adam brought down the power of death on him, so the obedience of the last Adam brought down life, and placed it within his

reach; and he does reach—he does possess—he does actually live, and shall live eternally, by the power of it, when he accepts it as a gift, freely tendered for his acceptance, in Christ, who is our life, by the action of a simple faith, which goes up to the effort of believing that God is true in all that he has revealed—of mercy, justice, and love, in Christ Jesus.

But, we have not yet reached the full intensity of the expression, that Christ *is* our life, that is, the life of true believers. The apostle had it in his mind, when he said, "for me to live is Christ." He did not mean (as some have supposed) for me to live to any good purpose, is to live in imitation of Christ; but he evidently meant—for me to be spiritually alive unto God, is to have Christ in me as my life; to have Christ formed in me, and so diffusing spiritual vitality throughout my whole personal being, whereby I am enabled to live unto God; "I live—yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,"—*His* life is *my* life, for I am one with him, as he also is one with me.

Thus, then, we perceive, it is one thing for Christ to possess life *for* us, or to bestow life *upon* us; but it is another and a deeper truth, that if we are alive unto God, Christ *is* our life. It is the result of a positive and personal relation subsisting between Christ and a believing sinner, who is enabled truly to say, "I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." If a rich man were to enrich me by a present gift, and an annual pension for life, we should all understand if I spoke of that person as *my wealth*. If a sovereign grants a patent of nobility and perpetuates the dignity, it would not be thought too figurative to say, that the sovereign *is the nobility* of the subject. Both these are results of relations subsisting between the rich man and the poor man; between the sovereign and the subject. I repeat, then, that by virtue of the actual relation between Christ the life, and the believer who is the recipient of the life, Christ is in the fullest sense the spiritual life of the believer. Christ is the head of the body—the church; and so communicates himself to every

member, whose membership consists in the fact of his being made spiritually alive in Christ;—not *through him* merely, but *in him*, by virtue of mystical and spiritual union; which union is cemented and perpetuated by the Spirit, through a true participation of the sacramental means, freely dispensed to all who are willing to receive them, in faith, in contrition, in humility, and love.

Let the inquiry now arise—Does Christ at this moment stand forth to you in the distinctiveness of his mediatorial character and office? Do the drawings of the Holy Spirit incline you to look up to him, as invested with the fulness of life for you? Are you a partaker of that life in him, so that you can say, with humble confidence,—Christ, the last Adam, *is* my life, the spiritual and eternal life which animates me,—a sinful descendant of the first Adam, whose forfeiture had made me a spiritually dead and destitute creature? If so, then thus let us meditate:—Oh! my soul, how profound is the depth of God's tender compassion—how vast the

expanse of his mercy, grace, and love displayed in providing a remedy, by way of *restoration*, so ample, for the penal death, which else must have fallen on thee with its crushing weight! Vast and wondrous truth!—Jesus, the everlasting God, has received life into his humanity; life—endless life, with its power over death, that he might dispense it to every believing member of his body.

Oh! my soul, if Christ be in thee, of a truth, then art thou filled with the light which is life; and the darkness, which is death, shall never prevail against thee. The life which he dispenses to every believing one, is that against which death lifts up no weapon. It is the life which is hid with Christ in God. It is that life which shall come forth in its eternal freshness from the grave's gloom, when the dead in Christ shall hear the voice of the Son of God, (at the first resurrection—the resurrection of the saints,) and shall stand forth on the broad platform of redemption, the living testimony to the fact that Jesus *is* the resurrection and the life.

Oh! my soul, this is the life which is now sustained in thee by *grace,* and nourished by blessed *ordinances;* the life that shall expand, as thou imbibest more and more of the preached word of life; and kneelest in prayer, trustful prayer, by the springs of life; and as thou feedest sacramentally on the body and blood of thy ever-living Lord and glorious head, who is thy life;—that life, in the active energy of which thou shalt fulfil duty, meet trial, endure affliction, triumph against temptation, and bring glory to him whose grace alone hath put away thy death, and clothed thee with immortality.

PRAYER.

My merciful and most compassionate God and Father! I bow before thee with adoring gratitude and love, for that thou hast in and by thy dear Son Jesus Christ, abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, by his Gospel, so that the lost children of the first Adam, made alive by grace through faith in the last Adam, may be enabled to say with full confidence, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." I bless thee for whatever tokens I have, of a participation of the life which is in Christ Jesus; and I pray unto thee, O God the Holy Ghost, that thou wouldest enable

me to manifest the power of that life, in righteousness and true holiness, to the glory of the eternal Trinity! Keep me, I beseech thee, very humble in the possession and enjoyment of this inestimable gift of eternal life; and never let me forget that all I am and have, except my sin, is the product and the bestowal of free and sovereign grace.

Jesus, my living Saviour and my life! I know that all my springs are in thee. Sustain, refresh, and bless me with the fulness of that life which thou camest to bestow most abundantly on those who should believe. Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. Keep me ever near to thee; and exercise in me, by the force of thy illustrious example, every grace which is the fruit of life eternal set up in my soul by union with thee. To thy sacred feast I come, for the renewal of that proper nourishment by which my soul (alive unto God in thee,) may be fitted for an eternal relation to thee, in thy kingdom of glory, yet to be set up and manifested. Enable me to shut out from my

mind all things pertaining to this world and its death and sin; and while approaching, remaining at, and returning from thy table, let me behold only thee, and in thee find grace and strength for the day, and for every day, till thou shalt come to be glorified in the midst of a loving, faithful, and waiting people. Amen.

CHRIST OUR WISDOM.

THE shrine of Wisdom is on high,
Where Faith alone can penetrate;
Deep in eternal sources lie
Its hidden springs immaculate,
Pouring their precious fulness down
On this poor world of dust and death,
Where Folly blinds and binds her own,
And mocks them with a fading wreath.

Pilgrims have drunk the gladd'ning streams,
And bounded on their heav'nward way,
Quitting the gay, delusive dreams
Of Folly's gorgeous—fleeting day.
Why should I thirst—but yet, in vain
When grace and goodness yield supplies?
Close by the fountain I'll remain,
And wait, and watch with longing eyes.

Hither, at length the fulness flows,—
Sparkling and fresh—it flows for me:
And now my thirsting spirit knows
How rich the grace—how full—how free.
JESUS—*my Wisdom!*—Thou alone
Canst raise my soul, and bid me take
The lofty ground where God is known,
And Saints their thirst for ever slake.

CHRIST OUR WISDOM.

"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who, of God, is made unto us Wisdom."—1 Cor. i. 30.

There is a connexion, in the purpose of God, between the Wisdom here referred to and the Life which has already claimed attention;—so that the one cannot be possessed without ensuring possession of the other. We proceed, then, to contemplate Christ as *our Wisdom*—the Wisdom of all true believers. For what Christ is, in himself, as mediator, such is he, as the "head of his body, the Church," and as the "head over all things to the Church, which is his body;" and such he is *in* every living member of that body. If as mediator and head of the Church, he is not only wise, but wisdom itself, then he is, of God, (that is by God's intention and gracious act) *made* unto every true believer, *Wisdom*.

Now this statement may, to some minds, appear more like a mystical theory, than a substantial reality experienced by multitudes, and to be experienced by all who are true members of Christ Jesus. We can understand how Christ may be the *source* of Divine and heavenly wisdom to his people; but it is not so obvious in what sense he can *be* their wisdom. In like manner, we can understand how one man may enrich another; but it might at first seem strange to speak of the benefactor as *the wealth* of the person benefited. So, a physician may instrumentally restore health to the afflicted, but it might be thought a forced mode of speaking, if we affirmed that the physician was *the health* of the restored patient. You now perceive clearly what it is that seems unusual in the statement of the text, that not only does Christ make his believing people wise, but that he *is* also *their wisdom.*

Now, in the clearing up of this statement, will be seen the particular point of doctrine, which it is desirable to establish.

It is plain, in the way of inference, that Christ as mediator, is not only wise, but essentially wisdom. In the twenty-fourth verse of this same chapter, he is called "*the wisdom of God,*" which is a very definite expression: and it is well we should remark, that this is not affirmed concerning the Divine nature alone of the Lord Jesus, because no such thing needed to be affirmed; for being God, he was, and is, assuredly, the Divine wisdom. But it is affirmed concerning Christ's *mediatorial person*—"God manifest in the flesh." It is affirmed of him who was born in Bethlehem, grew up to man's estate, wrought, suffered, died, rose and ascended. He, then, as mediator, is the wisdom of God *manifest* in human flesh. If as mediator, he was manifested in the flesh of man, as the wisdom of God, then surely it was, that man might be benefited through such a manifestation. It clearly could not aim at any prospective benefit for God himself. If Christ then was the manifested wisdom of God, then it was in order that he might be the diffused and the

communicated wisdom of God, to man, in such a degree, and to such an end, as man might be graciously made capable of receiving it.

The eighth chapter of the book of Proverbs sets before us a beautiful impersonation of Christ as the wisdom of God,—in the course of which, we find him saying, in reference to God the Father—"When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandments; when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." And in reference to man, he adds,—"rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Now therefore, hearken unto me, oh ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gate, waiting at the posts of my doors: for whoso findeth me, findeth LIFE." Findeth *what? Life!* He who findeth Christ as wisdom, findeth him also as life;

and thus, as soon as Christ is *made* unto us *wisdom,* he becomes unto us, *life.* Herein then, is a deep and blessed truth. Remember, wisdom in a spiritual sense, is rectitude. A state of wisdom therefore, is a state of justification; and he who is freely justified by faith in Christ, is made alive in Christ. In holy Scripture, sin and death are repeatedly spoken of by the term "folly;" and here we see, that justification and life are spoken of by the opposite term *wisdom.* Before Adam fell, he was *wise.* He fell, and so became subject to folly;—he became also *our* folly. We, his posterity, are all in like manner subject to folly; but when justified freely by grace, we are spiritually wise; for Christ is then made unto us wisdom, even as the first Adam was made unto us folly. We may now be prepared to enter into the meaning of those precious words of our Lord, in John xvii. 3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, (that is, *be wise in thee,*) the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Man may make great attainments in the vast range of human know-

ledge; but after all is attained, there is limitation, because there is death. This life ended, the largest stores of knowledge avail us nothing; for knowledge is not, in itself, wisdom. The only knowledge that expands into wisdom, is the knowledge of the only true God, and of Christ—God manifest in the flesh, in whom he stands fully revealed; and that wisdom, whensoever attained to, becomes life eternal in him who possesses it. This is another deep truth, illustrative and confirmatory of the former. Christ, set forth as the wisdom of God, in the book of Proverbs, becomes life to those who receive him; and, as set forth by St. John, Christ, (sent to manifest the Father) becomes life, as soon as he is known by the believer, and as soon as the believer knows the Father as revealed in him, which, together, constitute the riches of Divine wisdom. The truth, then, is, that all our right and saving knowledge of Christ, as the result of faith in him, flows from himself—is derived from him, and by him sent into our souls. His spirit is conveyed into ours,

—a beam of himself as of the sun. The Sun of righteousness, like the natural sun, is not seen but by his own light; so that every soul that is made wise unto salvation, that is brought to apprehend Christ, to cleave to him, and to repose on him, is so by virtue of a going forth of Divine light from himself, which shows him, and leads unto him; and thus it is that we know God in him; thus we become spiritually wise, because justified unto life: and Christ thus is made unto us wisdom, and that wisdom is life. There is no right knowledge of God the Father, but in the Son. God dwelling in the man Christ Jesus, will be found and known nowhere else: and therefore, they who consider and worship God out of Christ, do not know or worship the true God truly; but a false notion and fancy of their own—nowhere revealed in Holy Scripture. If Christ then dwells, by his Spirit, in the believing heart, he dwells there as the communicated wisdom of God. The justified sinner is in wisdom's way, which is the way of practical holiness, as well as of life. Is it not probable that the apostle had this great

truth in his mind, when he said in Col. ii. 9, 10, "For in him (that is, in Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power;" and when, in Ephes. iv. 22, &c., he urged believers to put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; and to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, and to put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness; and when again, in Col. ii. 2, he expressed his earnest desire that the hearts of believers might be comforted—being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God—even of the Father, and of Christ, in whom (or rather in *which mystery*,—that is, the Gospel,) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and at the sixth verse—"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."—What light do these passages throw upon the subject which is now before us;

and how plainly do they teach, that if justification through faith in Christ Jesus makes Christ our wisdom, in the form of *life*, then by his indwelling Spirit, he becomes also our wisdom, in the form of *practical holiness*. The calamity we derive from the first Adam, as the first father —*made* unto us *folly*, has its full remedy in Christ—the last Adam, who of God is made unto us *wisdom*.

To sum up this statement in the briefest and simplest manner, I will just add, that all we, as sinners, personally derive from Christ, whether it pertain to our justification, or to the formation and development of our Christian character, is the effect of union with him. And therefore it is, that he not only imparts to us wisdom, in the sense which I have endeavoured to express, but is, in fact, the wisdom which he imparts. And if the wisdom of Christ as mediator, results in our reinstatement in the favour of God, then our becoming so reinstated is, in truth, a partaking of the wisdom of Christ, and a manifestation of the holiness of Christ,

dwelling in us, by the Spirit;—which holiness is the fruit of spiritual life.

Without such a partaking of Christ, we are still under folly, and have no wisdom at all, whatever we may happen to know, and approve, and admire, of the gracious provisions of the Gospel;—for in the text it is said, "Of him are ye *in* Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom." To be in Christ Jesus, is therefore preliminary to his being our wisdom; and it is by faith through the Spirit, that sinners are brought into union with Christ. He then who has Christ as his wisdom, is endued with all that can make life happy, and eternity blessed.

Then, thus let us meditate:—Oh my soul, be humbled when reminded of the fact, that thy fall in the first Adam brought thee down from a state in which man walked with God, and plunged thee in the depths of folly. Thy first parent was formed in wisdom, and was wise. The light of wisdom within him was obscured, when the night of sin threw its dark mantle around him. But God has graciously manifested

his wisdom, in Christ Jesus, which wisdom is light and life. Whenever thou art drawn to the cross of Christ, thou art invited to imbibe that wisdom. When thou believest, it is thine! Oh! blessed truth, coming down from heaven to cheer and gladden thee! Hath God provided, and does he freely offer, thus much for thy acceptance, in the way of remedy for thy folly—then why should sin have dominion over thee? Why should thy faith stagger, and thy hope falter? If thou canst believe—all things are possible to him that believeth. If thy faith be but as a grain of mustard seed, its sincere and honest exercise upon Christ, its proper and legitimate object, will bring Him into thine heart, as thy wisdom; and thou—even thou, shalt walk in the light of life.

Oh my soul! if thou hast toiled for the attainment of the wisdom of this world, to the forgetting of Christ as the true wisdom—the wisdom that abideth and bringeth a blessing with it—cease from thy toil, and look upwards for a gift, even as it is written—"If any man

lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given unto him."

If thou hast Christ as thy wisdom, he will never leave thee. Thy folly shall never return upon thee, with power to destroy.

Wilt thou wait on him at his Sacramental table? Aye—wait—believe—hope—expect great things; and, if thou hast the wisdom within thee, it will expand. Thou wilt daily manifest thy wisdom more and more in the way of holiness to the Lord; and thy light, shining before men, shall glorify thy Father which is in heaven.

PRAYER.

JESUS, my wisdom!—I beseech thee send thy Spirit down to draw my heart into blessed and intimate communion with Thee. Thou art my all; and apart from thee, there is nothing in this world of ignorance, folly, and sin, that ought for a moment to satisfy me. Behold! it is all vanity, and cannot but divert the soul of man from its best and highest good. My Saviour! I would grow in wisdom, by growing up more thoroughly into thee. Thou knowest (none so well), the folly that is within my fallen nature; and when thou lookest into this frail heart, thou perceivest its downward tendency towards the ways of folly, and the paths of sinful departure from thee and from thy Father in heaven, unto whom thou hast brought me, by a revelation of Him in thyself. Oh my wisdom! hold thou me by the

hand, and by the heart, that I degenerate not into the habitude of fools, who know not Thee, nor the Father in and by Thee. Feed me with thyself, at thy sacramental table; and so shall I be made strong in the wisdom which is life, because strong in Thee.

Oh Father Almighty,—unsearchable in holiness! I cannot look up to Thee, but through him whom Thou hast given to be my wisdom, and who by thine own gracious act has been made unto me, wisdom. The folly of my natural heart would ever have kept me at a distance from Thee; and now, it often strives again to alienate me from my true allegiance to Thee. If left to myself, alas! how soon should I depart from the ground, on which Thy grace hath placed me. Oh! never let my trust be in myself, but in Christ, my wisdom, alone; so shall I walk securely before Thee; and, in godly consistency of life, bring glory to thy great name. This, oh my God, I desire to do, even to the end of life; and till I enter upon that resurrection-state, into which folly cannot

come, and where the true wisdom of thy beloved ones, in Christ Jesus, shall shine forth like the sun in the glory of his strength. Grant this, for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Oh, how shall I appear
Before the awful throne
Of Him whose judgment draweth near,
Who knows and seals his own ?
Without one righteous mark—
A fallen, guilty thing—
I stand, with passions strong and dark,
And sins that round me cling.

I fain would weep away
The marks of sin and woe ;
Would strive and do—would fast and pray,
As through this life I go ;
But, in the saltest tears
No righteousness is found ;
Nor in my best of works appears
One virtue to be own'd.

Out—from myself, I look
To Him who died for me ;
Who, to restore—my nature took,
And rose to set it free.
Jesus !—Thy work of grace
So perfectly is done,—
I plead before my Judge's face
Thy righteousness alone.

CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us .... righteousness."—1 Cor. i. 30.

We are now to contemplate the wondrous and most gracious provision of God for the justification of a sinner, who is altogether corrupt and unrighteous in himself; and therefore without any ground of claim to the favour and acceptance of God. Christ our Righteousness is that provision—all-sufficient and availing. The true believer is grafted into Christ Jesus; and then—and then only it is, that Christ is *his* righteousness. If any spiritual benefit is to be derived from Christ, it must be by the appropriating power of faith, through the Spirit. Christ may be, and is, righteousness—and righteousness *for us*;—but not *our* righteousness, till we have received him as he is revealed to us: just as if

riches were provided for a poor man, who cannot be thereby enriched till he has secured a real and permanent possession of them. This weighty and most important subject must be treated on the same principle, and beheld in the same light, as the preceding one, in which Christ was set forth as our wisdom. The principle is, that Christ *is, personally,* to all true believers, the very thing which he communicates to them;—that he does not merely bestow a benefit which flows from him as from a source; but that he is, himself, as the last Adam, the benefit which he bestows.

If we were not, by reason of our fall and apostacy in the first Adam, destitute of personal righteousness, the interposition of Christ, as the righteousness of God, would never have been needed. But our destitution is positive and unqualified. We are not only destitute of righteousness, simply from the want of it; but positively *unrighteous,* by reason of our actual and personal transgression. And since God is perfect in his righteousness, it is impossible that we should be

accepted into His favour and complacent love, without righteousness flowing from, and therefore harmonizing with, his righteousness. Nothing in the sight and estimation of God is righteousness, except *his own. He is righteousness;* and Christ is the incarnate manifestation of it. Righteousness can never be upon or in the creature, except as the donation of the Creator. If the first Adam was righteous at the moment when God pronounced him to be "very good," it was because he had received righteousness as a donation, at the Creator's hand. It was because the first Adam lost righteousness, that he lost God; for righteousness was the Divine image in which he was created. The restoration of righteousness to man's fallen nature, is the restoration of *God,* therefore, to man's soul. And if Christ be the manifested righteousness of God, then union with Christ must be the manner of the restoration; he is then *made unto us*—(as the act of God's free grace)—*righteousness;* and so the sinner, accepted in Christ Jesus, is counted righteous, by reason of

the righteousness of God in Christ, the second Adam, who, by a Divine donation, *is* his righteousness; for what Christ himself is, he is to all them that believe in him. Hence, "if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature (or a new *creation*)—re-created after a divine likeness; and that is—righteousness. The sinner is then the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.)

These statements prepare the way for several important remarks. And first, upon the definitiveness of the expression, that Christ "is made unto us righteousness." He is the righteousness of God, of necessity; but he is not our righteousness, equally of necessity. If he is our righteousness at all, he is *made*, of God, to be so. Then, on God's part, it must be an act of grace; and our restoration to God, through Christ, our righteousness, must be of grace also.

The next remark, is upon Christ, as the righteousness of *God*. That he must be, ere he

can be made our righteousness. That Christ, as God-man-mediator, was righteous—righteous without spot or imperfection, needs not to be proved. But to say that he was *righteousness* itself, and God's righteousness, opens a larger truth, which calls for illustration.

Righteousness in God, is of the very essence of his Deity. It is exhibited in his legislation, which is perfectly righteous. It is visible in his vindication of the law, which was an act perfectly righteous. It shines forth in his ministration of mercy to the guilty, an act as perfectly righteous as the other two. Now the legislation, the vindication, and the mercy, are all manifested in Christ Jesus, as the mediator between God and man. *By* him, the righteousness of Divine legislation was acknowledged; *in* him, the righteousness of the law's vindication was confirmed; and *through* him, the righteousness of mercy to the guilty is confessed. He was "made of a woman—*made under the law;*" and so the law's righteousness was written on his human heart, which was prepared to obey it.

He was "made under the law, *to redeem them that were under the law;*" and so, in him the law had its full vindication. He was "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, *that we might receive the adoption of sons;*" and so the righteousness of mercy to the guilty, found in him its full and sufficient development. Now, if we ask what it was that qualified Christ, as mediator, for all this—our ready answer is, that he was *God's righteousness;* and made that righteousness manifest, by this three-fold transaction.

Christ, being thus the manifested righteousness of God, was at once prepared to make that righteousness effectual towards all of the posterity of the unrighteous Adam, who should be willing to accept it; so that such acceptance might restore to them the image of God, in which the first Adam was created, but which he lost by transgression. That image was the righteousness of God, manifested in Christ Jesus. And now, in Christ, "the righteousness of God is *unto* all, and *upon* all who believe."

Christ, as the head of the body, the Church, was cradled in the righteousness of God. And it was in the *power* of that righteousness that he came to suffer penalty, to endure temptation, and to obey minutely. His righteousness—the righteousness of God, *unto and upon him*, was tested to the utmost—and it failed not. The righteousness of the first Adam had failed under temptation, and therefore under obedience. The righteousness of the last Adam triumphed over temptation, and became illustrious in obedience.

Now, as the first Adam communicated unrighteousness to his posterity, and thus became *their unrighteousness*, so the last Adam became and is, the righteousness of all true believers. The unrighteousness from the one source, and the righteousness from the other, were both matters of transmission. Thus, then, you will perceive that the righteousness of true believers does not consist in the possession and exercise of a merely moral integrity of principle and practice apart from Christ, but in a righteousness that is

essential in Christ as the head; and enjoyed in the way of imputation, and manifested in the way of holiness—by all who are in membership with him.

Hence, it is in Christ that the believing sinner is accepted by God, *as righteous;* and it is also in Him, as a righteous head, that the believer finds the well-springs of spiritual life, whose streams flow forth in practical righteousness and true holiness.

Whenever we would learn what Christ is to us, as the last Adam, in the way of gain and advantage, we must endeavour to see it in contrast with what the first Adam is to us, in the way of loss and disadvantage; so that if we discover, from the teaching of Holy Scripture, that the first Adam is our unrighteousness, we must go to the same source for the assurance that Christ, the last Adam, is our righteousness; and we must learn moreover that as the unrighteousness of the first Adam, imputed to us, was the procuring cause of our condemnation under the law, so the righteousness of the last

Adam, imputed to us, by grace through faith, is the procuring cause of our justification without the deeds of the law: for "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that *we might be made the righteousness of God, in him.*"

One more remark is needful, in order to set forth this subject clearly; and it is this. Christ, as the last Adam, received the sins of the first Adam and his posterity on himself, by way of imputation; and they were charged upon him, as if they had been his own, though in him there was no sin. But, being himself—as God—*essentially* righteous; and, as God-man-mediator, receiving, by donation, the righteousness of God, he was able, by the power of that righteousness, to throw off the imputation, by meeting the justice of the law, so as to satisfy it. He justified *himself*, therefore, as our surety, *by works*. His suffering was work; his obedience was work; and when the work, in both forms, was complete, the law had no further vengeance to execute; no further claim to make. When the believing sinner, therefore, is justified,

it is through the *works* of Christ as his righteousness; which justification he apprehends by faith: so that "being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And it is the faith which apprehends the *justification,* that brings the believing sinner into union with Christ as a righteous head, through the operation of the Spirit. Thus, everything that refers to our justification as sinners in the sight of Him who "justifieth the *ungodly,*" and everything that pertains to our acceptance as the children of God, is, in the light of revelation, traced to Christ as the one mediator between God and man—the head of the Church—the last Adam, "who, of God, is made unto us—Righteousness."

Such being the great foundation-truth of all experimental religion, thus let us meditate:—Oh my soul—be humbled—be stirred—be aroused by the thought, that by nature thou art destitute of all righteousness, in the sight of a holy and heart-searching God! The pride of the human heart asserts righteousness, in some

form or degree, on behalf of man. But the truth of God denies it. The arrogant assumption of the natural heart must be subdued, before thou canst consent to receive righteousness, as the donation of God, through Christ, and through faith in his name. Thine own righteousnesses are but as filthy rags. They cannot bear the scrutiny of God. They are loathsome in his sight. Nothing but his righteousness, imputed to thee, through Christ, can avail thee any thing. What thou deemest to be righteousness in thyself (and which sometimes commends self to thyself) will be like a millstone about thy neck, if the waves of perdition should gather about thee. So then, if thou wouldest enjoy peace with God here, and eternal blessedness hereafter, thou must renounce all supposition of merit in the works of righteousness thou hast done; and find thy righteousness in Christ alone.

Oh my soul! arise to the contemplation of the truth, that thine offended and dishonoured God hath provided a righteousness for thee—

that he hath manifested it to thee, in his own dear Son; that he tenders it to thee, for thine acceptance, in him. Draw from this truth another,—and never forget that *God loveth thee;* and, because he loveth, is prepared to justify thee freely—though, in thyself, thou art nothing but ungodliness. Look up—straight up to the Lord Jesus as thy righteousness. Plead that righteousness—build—rest—live—die upon it: and thy resurrection shall be blessed and glorious. It is a righteousness which cannot fail, because it is of God. It is a righteousness which cannot be disavowed, for God hath honoured it. It is a righteousness which will be always righteous, for it is divine. Possessing it, thou shalt stand securely when the world crumbles, and when the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Without it, there is nothing —nothing for thee, but the blackness of darkness for ever.

Oh my soul! if that righteousness be thine, if thy faith has appropriated it, then art thou "accepted in the Beloved;" thou art in Christ,

and therefore a new creation. Thou wilt come to the sacramental table of the Lord thy righteousness; and there feed upon the hidden manna, that shall nourish thee, and refresh thee, and sustain thee, as thou walkest through the wilderness of this world, towards the city which hath foundations—the new Jerusalem, which cometh down from heaven. The sacred feast is spread for thee. The Lord of the feast awaits to welcome thee—and the Spirit and the bride say —come!

What shall thy answer be?—"Lord, I have waited for thy salvation!"

PRAYER.

Oh God! holy and most righteous, who desirest truth in the inward parts, but findest in my corrupt nature nothing but sin, rebellion, and folly, I adore and magnify thee, for that thou hast provided a righteousness for me, in which I may stand complete, and so be fully accepted of thee in the Beloved. Other righteousness I have none; and if this, of thy providing, be not mine, by the acceptance of faith, through the Holy Ghost, then I have no plea. I can only cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This I do, and this I must do,—even when thy grace shall have done its utmost. But, if I have not thy righteousness, then, out of the depths indeed must I cry unto thee. Thou art the God who justifiest the ungodly,

and therefore do I hope; for thou hast revealed thy righteousness in Christ Jesus. He is righteousness for me—thy righteousness—even thine. My God, I believe this truth; and am willing to rest my soul on it. It cannot fail me. It is thine own truth. Thou wilt maintain it, for thou art faithful and true; yea, true to the veriest letter of thy word. But, oh! how feeble is my faith—how imperfect my realization of what I believe. I believe; and yet sometimes feel as if I had never believed. Oh! put away this sad inconstancy, by enabling me to look more to the object of my faith, which is Christ; and less to the sinful self who so needs him:—more to the righteousness, and less to the faith by which it is to be apprehended.

Jesus, my righteousness! Draw me, I beseech thee, into the completest union with thyself, that in thee I may stand before the Father, and taste the full sweetness of that peace which is the privilege of the justified sinner. I would rejoice in thee;—be thou the helper of my joy. I would love thee perfectly;—kindle my languid

affections towards thee. I would be like thee; oh! conform me by thy blessed Spirit; and so—perfect in holiness what has been commenced by grace.

My righteousness! At thy sacred feast I would be a humble, devout, loving, rejoicing, adoring guest. Thou thyself art my fitness for appearing there. Put away from me all ill-grounded fears, while I look to thee alone; and give me the assurance that in thee I have both righteousness and strength; so shall the new man, raised up by grace within me, expand and grow up to the full Christian stature—nourished by the living manna, and refreshed by the full streams of thy love. Amen.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION.

Chosen and call'd, and set apart
For holy uses now,
I give to God my wayward heart
To fill and to endow.

And oh! how richly He bestows
His grace—that I may be
Holy and pure, as one who knows
Life's end and ministry.

In Jesus separate I stand,
In Him am holy too;
Upheld by His all-gracious hand,
I'll think, intend, and do.

"Meet for the Master's service,"—I,
With ev'ry grace combin'd,
Would in my Saviour's sanctity
My bliss and glory find.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION.

"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us... sanctification."—1 Cor. i. 30.

Sanctification is a subject of great breadth, when traced out fully from the page of holy Scripture. It is at once the cause and the manifestation of the spiritual life of the believer. Devotedness to God in affection and act, is the fruit of it. It follows upon the apprehension of Christ as our peace and our righteousness. If he is both these to us, he will be sanctification also. If he be rejected as our peace and our righteousness, he never can become our sanctification; and we therefore can never be the possessors of a spiritual life, or feel the power of devotedness to God.

To possess Christ as our sanctification, implies a subsisting union between us and him. Such

is the plain teaching of the text. And in like manner, in the second verse of the same chapter, the apostle addresses himself "to them that are sanctified *in* Christ Jesus, called to be saints;" or, (as agrees best with the original) *called saints,* or holy people.

The words "sanctify" and "sanctification" are used in Holy Scripture with diverse significations—all of them to be determined by the context in which they stand. The simple and primary sense of the word "sanctify," is to *separate,* or to set apart for a sacred use or purpose; and "*sanctification,*" in that case, expresses the *state* of a person or thing so separated or set apart. In this sense, it implies no change in the quality or character of the person or thing. It refers only to the higher *use* or *purpose* unto which the separation has been made. This should be carefully borne in mind. Out of the numerous instances in Scripture, we may select Matt. xxiii. 17:—"Whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?" Here the gold used

in the decoration of the temple, was separated from other materials unto that end; and though incapable of any change, yet it was said to be sanctified—that is, to be in a state of separation for a holy use. We may also refer to John xvii. 19, where our Lord says—"And for their sakes (that is, for the sake of all true believers,) I *sanctify myself.*" Now here also it is evident that the word is used in the like sense. The Lord Jesus Christ, as God-man-mediator, was in every respect essentially holy. His deity was holy. His manhood was holy. He therefore did not mean to say, that, for the sake of true believers, he made himself holy; but rather that for their sakes he separated or set apart himself for a sacred use or purpose, the result of which should be *their* separation or setting apart for a holy use and purpose. It was as if he had said —I sanctify or set myself apart to the office of mediator, whereunto I have been called by the Father. In this sense, then, Christ's sanctification was his *state of separation,* for the purpose of mediating between God and man.

But there is another sense in which these expressions are used, which needs to be mentioned. To sanctify, means also to *purify,* or *separate* from pollution, either *ceremonially,* under the Levitical dispensation; or *really* and *substantially,* by the offering of the body of Christ. Of the ceremonial usage of the word, reference may be made to one, out of many instances,—in Levit. xvi. 19, where the mode of making atonement (ceremonially) for the altar, is prescribed. It is there said,—He (the high priest) shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger, seven times, and cleanse it, and *hallow* it,* (that is, separate by cleansing it ceremonially, from pollution,) from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Of the usage of the same expression in a real and substantial sense, I may refer to Heb. x. 10, where it is said,—"By the which will, we (that is, true believers) are sanctified," (purified, separated from our natural pollution,) "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." He therefore who has

* Sept. ἁγίασει αὐτὸ.

from his sins, by the effectual application of Christ's blood which cleanseth from all sin, is, in this sense of the word, sanctified or made clean; and his "*sanctification*" is the state into which he is then brought, as contrasted with his carnal and polluted state, before Christ's blood was applied.

There is a still higher sense in which the same expressions are used; and in this sense, to "sanctify," is to *make holy*;—not merely to cleanse from a state of uncleanness, but to communicate the *quality* of holiness to him who, before his separation, was "common;" who, before his purification, was "unclean;" and who, before he was made holy, was simply—not unclean, having been cleansed by the blood of Christ. An instance of this may be seen, in Acts xx. 32—"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are *sanctified*." Here the context shows that the word is to be taken in the highest sense;—the desire of the

Apostle being, that those to whom he addressed himself might attain to that personal holiness which should make them, as separated and cleansed believers, meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. A similar instance appears in Chap. xxvi. 18. A striking passage is also found in Eph. v. 26, 27, where the apostle declares that Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that, as a body *separated* unto God, he might "sanctify and *cleanse* it;" and that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be "*holy and without blemish.*" Here we notice the three senses combined;—the *separation,* the *cleansing* from pollution, and the *making holy.* And the Apostle, in 1 Thess. v. 23, while addressing those who had been separated unto God, and cleansed by the blood of Christ, says, "And the very God of peace *sanctify* you wholly (that is, make you as holy as he desires you to be); and I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless (that is, strong in

holiness) unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And this he might well say, having, in Ch. iv. 3, declared to them, "For this is the *will of God,* even your sanctification"—your substantial holiness; even as he taught the Ephesians in Ch. i. 4, that God had chosen them *in Christ* before the foundation of the world, that they should *be holy* and without blame before him in love;—that, in fact, they might be (as he taught the Romans, Ch. viii. 29,) "conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."

Enough has been now advanced to give the attentive and intelligent reader an insight of the three principal senses in which the words "sanctify" and "sanctification" are used in Scripture. It must now be borne in mind, that these three senses are to be combined, when we speak of a believer as a sanctified person or saint; because, first, he is set apart for a holy use, by the elective grace of God; next, is cleansed from his natural pollution; and then invested with the principle and power of holi-

ness. And thus it is, that God's purpose of grace and love has its fulfilment in him; and he has his title to an inheritance with the saints,—and shall surely, in due time, possess and enjoy the inheritance itself.

Now, all these statements are preparatory to showing how Christ is *made unto us*—sanctification;—how, in fact, he comes *to be*, (not merely to *procure*, but *to be*,) our sanctification—the sanctification of all who effectually believe.

Let it be ever borne in mind, that if Christ is anything at all to us, it is by virtue of our union with him by faith through the Spirit; and therefore by virtue of that union, he is *every* thing to us that God's grace, mercy, and love intended he should be. Without that union, though he may be the Redeemer of the world from the curse of the law, yet he is nothing to us as our *personal* Saviour. And hence it is, that salvation is of faith; for *faith* in Christ results in union with Christ; and that union is salvation, because it is *sanctification*.

These statements prepare us for the intro-

duction of a text containing the key-note of the whole matter; which, if understood by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, will enable us at once to perceive how Christ is made unto us sanctification. It is in Heb. ii. 11, where the Apostle says—"For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are *all of one;* for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Let it be remembered, that when Christ was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," he was "*conformed*" to *us*—sin only excepted; and this was in order that we might, according to the eternal purpose of God, become "*conformed*" to *him*—to his "*image,*" the essential idea of which is *holiness.* When he took our nature, he took it as the last Adam, and as our brother; and therefore was not ashamed to call us brethren. And he was the "first-born" (in the way of resurrection) among many brethren, in order that he might communicate to all his believing brethren the holiness of his resurrection-state;—I say the *holiness* of his resurrection-state, because he went to his grave under the imputation of our

sin, and was raised again, freed from that imputation, in order to our justification. (Rom. iv. 25.) When he rose as the first-born, he rose as the head, and the type too, of all true believers, who are said to be "*risen* with Christ," as soon as they are truly partakers of Christ, by virtue of their union with him by faith through the Spirit. In this sense, then, "he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are *all of one*," that is, — of one family, of one likeness, of one relation to God;—they are living to one end, and shall share one glory. What Christ is, as the head of the body, the church, that he is to every true member of his body. And thus he is their sanctification. They were chosen *in him* before the foundation of the world; and so he is their sanctification, in the way of *separation* to a holy use. They are *cleansed* through his blood; and so he is their sanctification in the way of *purification*. They are, *in him*, sanctified unto holiness of life; and so he is their sanctification in the way of *conformity* to a divine likeness. In these respects, then, Christ who sanctifieth,

and believers who are sanctified, (that is, set apart for and unto God, cleansed and made holy,) are *all* of *one*. Christ was not only the *procuring cause* of their separation, their cleanness, and their holiness, but the *things themselves;* for it is *as they are in Christ*, that God regards them; and therefore when accepted of him, we are "accepted in the Beloved." If then we lose sight of Christ's headship, and of our membership with and in him, we fail to perceive how he is our sanctification; nor can we then discern, with any clearness, how, while a sinner is out of Christ, he is destitute of all sanctity in the way of separation unto God;—of all sanctity, in the way of purification; and of all sanctity, in the way of personal holiness. And we apprehend that many of the obscure notions which prevail in regard to the true Christian state, have their origin in a confused perception, or no Scriptural perception at all, of Christ's headship, and of the benefits which accrue from it to all the living members of his mystical body—the church. It is on this account that I call for a

steady consideration of this weighty doctrine; for to believe something *about* Christ, will not avail us; but to believe *into* him, so as to be one with him, as our sanctified head and the source of our *sanctification,* is to believe according to the will of God, even unto our full sanctification and salvation. Let us now attend to those memorable words in 1 John iv. 15—17:—"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, *God dwelleth* in him, and *he* in *God.*" Of this union, Christ—God manifest in the flesh, is the connecting link. Then it follows, that God *indwelling* with us, *through* Christ and *in* the *person* of Christ, *is* our sanctification—our essential holiness; and nothing short of this, or inferior to this, is, or can be, holiness. Now mark the next two verses—"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, (or, as the margin reads it, herein is *love with us* made perfect,) that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as *he* (that is,

Christ) is, so are we in this world." Let us not overlook the force of this latter expression,—*as* Christ *is,* so are we, as his believing and living members, in this world. He is one with the Father—we are one with him: and so we dwell in God. He is separated unto God; so are we—*in him.* He is clean; so are we—*in him.* He is holy; so are we *in him.* As Christ the head is, so are all his true members while in the world; and therefore they will have boldness in the day of judgment. The ground of all their boldness will consist in the assured—the experienced fact, that he *is* their sanctification.

And now we have before us the materials out of which, by the Holy Spirit's teaching, we may come to a full apprehension of Christ as our sanctification, as well as our peace, our wisdom, and our righteousness. It may have been expected that I should speak of the Holy Spirit's office as connected with a due experience of Christ as our sanctification, but that topic would be out of place just now;—the sole object being to set forth Christ as the sanctification of

true believers. It may, however, be briefly stated, that it is the Holy Spirit's office to lead sinners to Christ, and to reveal him in his perfections—the perfections of his person and of his mediation; and then—having effected union with Christ, as the sanctification of the sinner—to develope the principle and power of holiness in the *believer*. Thus, then, though the sanctification is wrought out by the Spirit—still Christ is the sanctification itself; and the Spirit's office and Christ's office are distinct, yet co-operating to one end—even the renewing us unto righteousness and true holiness.

It is now time that we give ourselves to meditation on the great truth which has occupied our thoughts; and therefore, thus let us meditate:—Oh my soul! remember—it is because thou hast no holiness in thyself, but art altogether alienated from God by wicked works, and by the power of sin within thee, that thou needest a holiness flowing from a source that is beyond thee. It is because thou canst not sanctify thyself, that God, in the exercise of a free and

sovereign grace, hath provided a sanctification for thee, and revealed it in the person of His own divine Son—thy Redeemer. Be humbled on account of thy sin. Be grateful for the interposition of a gracious and most compassionate God, who deals not with thee through the terrors of the law—but in the brightness of the mercy-seat. If he hath provided, in Christ, a sanctification for thee, in the power of which he can delight in thee with all complacency, surely it is because He hath already reconciled thee unto Himself by Jesus Christ. Then, be sure that this sanctification is free for thee:—be sure—that if thou wilt, thou mayest be—holy;—holy in Christ—and so conformed to *His* image, as the first-born among many brethren.

Oh my soul! hast thou realized union with Christ, as thy sanctification—by faith through the Spirit? Hast thou let go thy hold upon *thyself*, and found satisfaction in the fulness of Christ, as thy wisdom and thy righteousness;—and does Christ, as thy sanctification, satisfy thee and delight thee? Dost thou feel the

power of holiness within thee? Does it stimulate and quicken thee to the production of those fruits which testify that thou art alive in Christ, and that he is thy holiness—and its power?—Thy loving God intends all this for thee. And if thou art conscious of any deficiency of actual experience, be encouraged to press forward, in the use of means — of God's own appointed means, till thou shalt attain to all the holiness thou art encouraged to desire, and to all the blessedness which must follow in its train.

Wondrous—oh my soul—wondrous is the love that thus tends thee, and that thus waits on thee, hour by hour, and day by day, and Sabbath by Sabbath—that so Christ may be thy full sanctification, and that thou mayest reflect the elder Brother's likeness!—Wilt thou respond to it? Wilt thou not meet love with love? Wilt thou not love him who hath so loved thee, and still loves thee? Canst thou love him—and leave any means of grace unused? Canst thou desire Christ as thy full sanctification, and leave his sacramental cup untouched, and the symbol of

his wounded body untasted? Oh vain desire, if there be a neglected sacrament! Oh—blindness of heart, if there be no desire! Oh—astounding peril of the soul—if the blindness of heart remains—to shut out the Saviour from thee!

Oh my soul—be found—like Mary, at the feet of Jesus; — like John reposing on his bosom; and ere long thou shalt be with him—like Moses and Elias on the Mount, beholding and sharing his sanctification—resolved into glory unspeakable.

PRAYER.

Oh adorable and ever-blessed Lord Jesus—my sanctification! I look up unto thee, with the fervent desire to be thoroughly separated unto the Father, and made clean and holy, by a living union with thee, through thy Spirit. Thou art the sanctification provided for me, by the wondrous grace of a compassionate God—who beholds me, as I am in myself, altogether unclean and unholy. In thee, He will behold me renovated unto holiness. My mind, my will, my affections, will then be holy. Oh! I would not be satisfied with anything less than this. Look upon me in thy tender love, and draw me up into thyself. I yield myself entirely unto thee, and would make no reserves. Encourage my feeble faith, and make it more

steady and enduring. Let nothing shake it, or constrain it to relax its hold on thee. At thy sacramental table, be thou graciously present to the perception of my soul. There enable me, by thy Spirit, to imbibe more and more of the power, as well as the quality of holiness, by a more enlarged reception of thee.

And oh! my heavenly Father, who knowest what I am, and what I need—behold me, I pray thee, in Christ, as my only sanctification; and look complacently on me, with thy unchangeable love. Without this—alas! how can I look up to thee, who art infinitely holy, and before whom unholiness can have no abiding-place. Thou desirest that I should be like him, whom thou hast set forth as my sanctification. Oh, make me so; and grant that such may be perpetuated in me, throughout time, and when I behold thee in eternity. Oh God! most gracious—hear and answer me, for the sake alone of thy dear Son, my Saviour, and my sanctification. Amen.

CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION.

When Sin and Death had forg'd the dreadful chain
Which bound the ruin'd race of Adam down,
Hell seem'd to triumph, while with effort vain
The captives toil'd in fetters—heavier grown.

Stronger than hosts of Hell, Redemption rose
In God's incarnate—dying—rising Son:
Claiming the slaves—he bade the grave unclose,
And tell the world Redemption's work was done.

Redeemer and Redemption—both appear
In concentrated grandeur in His face;
While distant heav'n now shines in prospect near,
And souls redeem'd,—rejoicing own His grace.

Free—and for ever!—let our spirits soar
In faith and love to the Eternal Throne;
And wait until the pow'rless grave restore
The sheeted dead whom He hath made His own.

CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION.

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us . . . . Redemption."—1 Cor. i. 30.

Having already contemplated Christ, as made unto all true believers—wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, we are now to behold him as being made unto us, *Redemption* also.

To redeem, is an expression used in Scripture, to signify the act of buying back, or retrieving by a price, persons or things which had been alienated. It is applied to the transactions of the sabbatical or redemption-year, under the law, when mortgaged possessions, and persons in a state of poverty and servitude, were restored, through the intervention of the next of kin, who was the redeemer for that purpose. This redemption was no doubt intended to be typical; and we find the word "redeem" applied to the

mediatorial act of Christ, on behalf of the fallen posterity of Adam. Hence it is said, by St. Paul to the Galatians, (Chap. iv. 4,) that "when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, *to redeem them that were under the law.*" And in writing to Titus, he also declared, (Chap. ii. 14,) that Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us *from all iniquity.* Christ, then, is the *next of kin* to the posterity of Adam, for the purpose of redeeming them—having been made in all things like unto his brethren, sin only excepted. In the exercise of his office as Redeemer, he redeemed them from the *penalties,* as well as from the *bondage* of the law; and this act extended so far, also, as to redeem them from the enslaving power of iniquity and sin. The effect of this wondrous transaction, was the emancipation of the posterity of Adam, in order to their acceptance of all the privileges of freedom, in and through him—namely, life eternal, renovation of mind and heart, and a participation of a glorious inheritance, as members of the

family of heaven;—heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Thus, then, Christ became, by his own personal act, *our death* unto sin; *our life* unto righteousness; and *our resurrection* unto eternal glory: for what he effected, in the way of redemption, he effected, not as an individual, but as the head of a believing race—a people who were *in him* from all eternity, according to the sovereign grace and purpose of God the Father.

From the word "redeem," we find the sacred writers derive another word—namely, *redemption;* which is used in two senses, each having direct relation to the other. The first of these two senses, we find expressed in Ephes. i. 7, where it is said—"In whom," that is, in Christ, "we have *redemption* through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." This mode of expression is elsewhere several times used by St. Paul, particularly in Heb. ix. 11, 12, where it is said—"Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having *obtained eternal redemption* for us." The word redemption, thus used, signifies, therefore, the positive *effect* and *result* of Christ's act as Redeemer. He came to *redeem;* and he *accomplished,* and so *"obtained"—redemption.* What, therefore, a believing sinner receives when he rests by faith on Christ alone, is redemption—a *state* of redemption, or a redeemed state. He is safely purchased away from all that had ever kept him apart from God, and is reinstated in the family and favour of God, in Christ Jesus, his Redeemer. In this case, then, not only has the redemption been effected, but it has also been embraced by faith;—effected by Christ—embraced by the sinner; and the sinner who has embraced it, is called the Lord's "freeman;"— he has partaken of the liberty, wherewith Christ alone can make us free. He is, therefore, in the sight of God, as free from the law's terrors, from the law's bondage, and from the condemning power of sin, as his Re-

deemer himself is free. He is free to serve God in the newness of the Spirit;—free to seek and obtain holiness, as an inward and spiritual power;—free to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord;—free to the enjoyment of the fulness of the covenant of grace, in time and in eternity.

The second sense of the word redemption, we find expressed in Rom. iii. 24, where it is said—"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is IN Christ Jesus." Here, it evidently signifies the *redemption-price* paid for our deliverance; which price was Christ *himself*—his person—his life—his precious blood. It is equivalent to the word "ransom," used in 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6:—"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave *himself* a *ransom*, (that is, a full and effectual redeeming-price) for all:"—which passage is based upon our Lord's own saying, in Mark x. 45:—"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his *life* a *ransom* for many."

These passages may be sufficient to show that the word "redemption," as used in the text, is of very large and extensive application; and may prepare the way for our apprehending clearly, how Christ is—not only our *Redeemer* effecting redemption for us, but the *redemption itself*, the *state*, and the *price* of it too;—by virtue of which, a believing sinner eventually triumphs over sin, death, and hell, and goes up to the glorious inheritance of the saints in light.

It is in no wise difficult to perceive how Christ becomes our *Redeemer*. The fact of his undertaking to be so, is the proof that he is so. Before we accept him as such, by faith—he is so *provisionally;* as soon as we accept him, he is so *beneficially;*—we are then not only redeemed, but we *have*—we *possess, redemption;*—we are in a *redeemed state.*

But the text goes beyond this. It does not declare that Christ is of God made unto us a Redeemer, but *redemption;* he *is* our redemption. Every thing that God's grace and mercy intends for us, is *in Christ;* and must therefore

be possessed and enjoyed by virtue of our union with him, through faith by the Spirit. Now, let it be observed, that Christ, as Redeemer, took our position under the law, and under sin;—being under the law, by the *fact* of his incarnation in Adam's flesh; being under sin, by *imputation*. As the last Adam—the second—the *redeeming head* of a fallen race, he wrought out redemption from the law and from sin; and it became his possession. It became his, that he might communicate it, *as a possession*, to all, who by faith should become united to him. In possessing *him*, they possess *it*, *in* him. And moreover, this redemption being a *derived* redemption to those who possess it in and through Christ—he who was the procurer of it on their behalf, is, in the simplest view we can take of the matter—*their* redemption.

In like manner, if Christ, in his own person, was the ransom or redemption-*price*, on the paying down of which, our emancipation depended; and if the offering of himself up once for all, was such a paying down of the redemption-price,

as the exigency of the case required, then, in this view also, it becomes scripturally true, when we say that Christ is our *Redemption.* The price paid, being the equivalent for the thing received,—it follows that the redemption effected, and the personal sacrifice of Christ—the *effective cause* of it, are both understood in the one word, "redemption."

Now—to some minds, statements such as these may seem like refinements in theology;—or as matters of intricacy and difficulty—better let alone. But indeed they are not so. They are truths revealed to us, and therefore intended to be known, understood and experienced. And my wish is—as God shall enable me—to draw your minds up from the common-places of evangelical statements—to the loftiest realities;—to make you dissatisfied with vague and generalising views of Christ, which we so commonly find among certain Christian professors, who search not into the Bible for themselves as a mine of precious treasure, but are content with scraps and selections — a few favourite texts.

They know that Christ and Christ's work must be their sole dependance; they are ready to say, and do say, Christ is all; and that nothing but Christ will do. We are thankful when we hear as much as this from those around us. But we would have them perceive clearly *how* it is, that these truths which they avow, have come to be truths. To them, at first sight, it may seem like a matter of very small importance, whether Christ be regarded simply as our *Redeemer,* or emphatically our *Redemption.* And they may say, "If I am really and sincerely living by faith on the Son of God and of man — Jesus Christ—how can it matter, whether I call him my Redeemer or my redemption?"

The simple answer I have to give, is, that if I have Christ in me as my redemption, and therefore Christ in me the hope of glory (for such he must also be)—then do I realise the fact of my salvation, as one who has secured his *redemption* by securing *Christ;*—as one who has found in Christ the purchase-price and the thing purchased;—the redemption-price, and the

redemption effected and perpetuated for eternity; so that bondage can never return upon the soul, either under the law or under sin: and so that eternal life set up in the believing soul, can never be extinguished or overpowered. What "the *man* Christ Jesus" is, as *my redemption*, such I know I shall be; for it is promised, that when he shall appear, I shall be like him; for I shall see him as he is. (1 John iii. 2.) As the "Son of Man" is, so shall I be; for he has declared, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me in my throne, even as I have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne." We enter upon the experience of grand certainties, when we have experience of Christ in us as our Redemption. While we regard him simply and vaguely as a Redeemer, from whom we *may* obtain all blessings we have need of, the utmost we can enjoy is a state of *hopefulness*, that all *may* be well with us at last. And can this satisfy the wants or quell the fears—can it chase away the gloom, and bring in peace and joy to the heart that has

groaned under the conviction of being naturally dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the terrible condemnation of the law? It cannot;—at least it ought not. Many a sinner, it is to be feared, has failed of enjoying the Christian's safety and the Christian's peace, because he would not lift up his heart or stimulate his intellect to the investigation of the deep things of God, which have their foundation and their root in the person and in the offices of Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and man. We would have Christians take large and comprehensive, as well as minute and particular views, of Christ: and we would not have them contented till the Holy Spirit shall have thoroughly performed his office in them; till he shall have taken of the things of Christ, and shown them unto them: till, in fact, he shall have interwoven with their very being, a perfect revelation of a perfect Christ — perfect in himself and to them—perfect as his own—and equally as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

For this, it behoves us to be instant in prayer. God gives without measure to those who, in the patience of faith, wait upon him at the foot-stool of his mercy-seat. And as meditation helps to clear our views, to quicken our desires, and to aid the exercises and the far-reaching of our faith—thus let us meditate:

Oh my soul!—The revealed purpose of God in Christ Jesus, is, that thou mayest be the free man of Christ; that the Law may neither crush, nor fetter thee; that sin may not enslave thee; and that death may not destroy thee. Grace hath gone forth on thy behalf, and had its full manifestation in the offering up of Jesus once for all. The Redeemer hath come with deliverance in his hand. He hath come—himself the redemption-price, and the redemption. If thou art still living under a sense of bondage, surely it is because thou art unbelieving; because thou lovest the fetters more than thou desirest liberty. The redemption is wrought out; and when thou believest, it is thine; for *then, Christ is thine*—and not till then.

Oh my soul! it is to a work finished for thee by Christ, that a God reconciled would have thee look: it is from a work finished in thee by Christ—thy redemption, that a God reconciled would have thee draw all thy sense of safety, peace, and joy. Is the mystery of redemption vast and deep? Then seek to fathom it by the Holy Spirit's guidance, and with the light of the revealed word in thine hand and in thy heart. Is the blessing to which it leads unspeakable—and does a sense of thine unworthiness of it humble thee? Then, remember, it is of grace—that God may be exalted; it is his free gift, that thou mayest indeed be humbled. Oh! seek to have Christ in thee as thy Redemption; and thou shalt descend into the grave with the power of an endless life: and the achieved and bestowed redemption shall show forth its triumph on the morning of the resurrection, when the cry shall be, "O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory!"

PRAYER.

Oh God! most merciful, forbearing, and compassionate, I would fain draw near to thee in Christ Jesus,—as my redeeming God. Thou foundest me in bondage under the law, under sin and death, helpless and hopeless, a fallen child of a guilty parentage; and thou hast in great love to my soul and body, provided, announced, and fully revealed unto me, redemption, in thy dear Son, Jesus Christ. In his cross and passion I behold the wondrous means, whereby deliverance hath been wrought for me; and now, I adore and magnify thee, for that, in him, thou dost permit and encourage me to look up to thee, in the realization of that liberty, wherewith he alone could make free the guilty and the lost. Oh! let not doubt or unscriptural

fears invade the faith, with which I would endeavour to apprehend and embrace Christ fully, as my redemption.

My God! if I am free, I would fain serve thee "in newness of the spirit," and no longer "in the oldness of the letter." Give me, I pray thee, the dignity of freedom, by investing me with its power; and let my whole life be spent in the exercise of that power to thy glory. Make me, by the constant grace of thy holy Spirit, watchful and guarded against every thing that would sully that dignity, or undermine that power.

And oh! thou loving and faithful Lord Jesus, who art both my Redeemer and redemption, reveal thyself to me more fully, that I may live assuredly in the full enjoyment of that blessed state, into which thou hast brought me, in thyself. Make me more sensible of my entire dependance on thee; and never let me seek or desire anything that may not be found in thee. Fill me with thyself; and let the sacred feast to which thou dost so lovingly call me, be the

honoured means for working in me that fulness. Oh my redemption! I adore thee—I choose thee beyond all inferior good. Let my free spirit repose itself on thee, and never let me be again entangled with the yoke of bondage. Amen.

CHRIST OUR BROTHER.

I HAVE a Brother;—and his name
Is JESUS—CHRIST—IMMANUEL!
His love is ev'ry day the same;
Its depth and fulness none can tell.
There's not a sorrow of my heart,
But he hath felt it in his own;
There's not a wound from Satan's dart,
But he its bitterness hath known.

He's not asham'd to own the tie
By which he bound himself to me,
When he beheld me hopeless lie,
And took my flesh—to make it free—
Free from the grasp of sin and death—
Free from the law's vindictive power;
And gave me, with his parting breath,
A token for my dying hour.

JESUS, *my Brother!*—on thy love—
Thy faithful love, I build my hope—
The hope which dares to look above,
And knows no limit to its scope.
Oh! tenderer than all the ties
That bind poor earthly hearts—is this
On which my grateful soul relies,
For heav'n, and home, and endless bliss.

CHRIST OUR BROTHER.

"He is not ashamed to call them brethren."—Heb. ii. 11.

Inasmuch as things spiritual transcend our natural powers of perception, God, with great condescension, sets them before us by symbols with which we are familiar. The symbolical language of Holy Scripture, then, is not used for the purpose of adornment, but in order to accommodate deep mysteries to our very limited capacities. Hence every symbol has a definite and positive signification. Those symbols, drawn from human relationships, are at once the most expressive and touching. Thus, the church of Christ, which he has purchased with his blood, is called "the whole *family* in heaven and earth" (Eph. iii. 15); than which, nothing can be more expressive of the tender and abiding

relationship subsisting between God and the church, and between all true members of the church. The members are brethren; and God is the Father of all, above all, through all, and in them all. (Eph. iv. 6.) But this symbol would be incomplete without the introduction of Christ—God-man-mediator—the only begotten Son of the Father, into the family. Therefore he is set forth to us in the relation of a brother. "Whosoever," said he, "shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister." The reason of this is assigned very simply, when the apostle says, "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one (that is, all of one heavenly parentage—children of the same Father); for which cause he is not ashamed to call them *brethren*." (Heb. ii. 11.) And again, "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his brethren*, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb. ii. 17.)

Let it not then be supposed that the thing signified by this symbol, is in any degree less than the symbol actually expresses; but let our faith go fully up to the fact, that between true believers, who are born of God, and between them and Christ, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,—there is a positive and real fraternity existing; as positive and real as that which subsists between the members of a human family—the children of one father. The mystery of such a relation doubtless lies very deep; we cannot fathom it; and we may suppose that it is for this reason the symbol is thus applied. We can all easily understand and feel the relation of brotherhood; and we have only to lift up our minds to the most exalted sense in which it can be experienced, in reference to our spiritual state, in order to bring the fact (though not the mystery of it) within the grasp of our faith. There is no need for us to fathom the mystery, so long as we thoroughly embrace *the fact*. When it is so embraced, then indeed do our consolations in Christ abound.

There are several particulars which now require to be stated in detail; the first of which is, that those who are brethren partake of one *nature*. Thus then it is said of Christ —"Forasmuch then as the children (that is, God's children — the family of heaven and earth) are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death (or, through dying) he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily, he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. ii. 14—16.) It is also said of Christ, that he "was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 7, 8.) And further, "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the

flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 3, 4.)

Thus, then, we have the fact clearly revealed to us, that Christ laid the foundation of brotherhood, by actually assuming the *nature* of those whom he condescends to call brethren. He became our Brother indeed, at the very moment of his incarnation, according to the eternal purpose of God; and in such a relation does he now stand to every true child of God.

The next particular to be mentioned is, that mankind, as brethren, are so by natural birth, or become so by *adoption* into a family. The ancient laws relative to adoption, from which the symbol is taken, enabled the adopted children of a family to share the estate with the naturally-born children, and to assume the family name of him who adopted them. In every respect they participated all the privileges of the family circle. Now, no simple descendant of Adam can, by virtue of his birth in the flesh, be a member of God's family; nor can he be adopted,

unless "born again," "born of water and of the Spirit." But, being born again, his adoption follows in the way of simple consequence. And thus—becoming in Christ a new creature, the bond of fraternity between him and Christ is cemented. He possesses the spirituality of Christ, as Christ possesses his human flesh. It is plain, that the purpose of God in Christ Jesus reached forth quite to this end; for it is said that he "predestinated us unto the *adoption* of children *by Jesus Christ.*" (Eph. i. 5.) Again—"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive *the adoption* of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of *his Son* into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a Son; and if a son, then an heir of God *through Christ.*" (Gal. iv. 4—7.) All which texts make quite plain the statement of St. John, that "As many as received him, to them gave he power to

become the *sons* of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John i. 12.) That, therefore, which is impossible with man in his natural state, becomes at once practicable in and through Christ; and the bond of brotherhood, originated by Christ in his incarnation, becomes, under God, and by the operation of His Holy Spirit, the procuring cause of the adoption of the regenerate believer into the family of God; who, by virtue of the adoption, is an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ.

The next particular is, that between those who are brethren in heart, as well as in fact, there is family *likeness* and *sympathy*. Hence, believers are enjoined to let this mind be in them which was also in Christ Jesus (Philip. ii. 5); and are said to have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge *after the image* of him that created him (Col. iii. 10). Thus also, Christ is revealed to us as one who can have compassion on us; and as one touched with a feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv. 15). He became like us in the flesh, that he might

communicate his likeness to us, as the adopted children of God: and it is likeness to Christ in some degree attained to, that marks the members of the family of God. The sympathy, however, is all on the side of Christ. God created a human sympathy in Christ, at his incarnation; the exercise of which helped on the work of redemption, and sweetens the bond of brotherhood, which binds into one body Christ as the elder Brother, and the adopted ones, whom he is not ashamed to call brethren.

From these three particulars we infer that Christ, becoming our Brother by taking on him our nature, and linking it on to his Deity, had power over that nature, first to redeem it; and then, by his Spirit, to infuse life—his own spiritual life, into it. Next, that as the elder Brother, he had the disposition as well as the power to put aside every obstacle in the way of our full and free adoption into his Father's family; and to make sure the adoption, to all who by grace, through faith, should receive him; so that—knowing him as their Brother,

they might exercise the spirit of adoption, when received, and call God Father. And lastly, that as a sympathising Brother, communicating his likeness to all the members of the household of faith, he must be the great object of our faith, and the foundation of all our hope, as members of the family of God.

Thus, then, is Christ set before us in that very aspect which is the most attractive. But when we see all his offices proceeding out of this central fact of brotherhood;—when we spiritually know that the great Prophet of the Church is our brother; that the great high priest of our profession, is our brother; that the king of an unspeakably glorious kingdom, is our brother:—then we are assured, that the teaching of the prophet is the teaching of our brother; that the sacrifice offered by the priest, was the sacrifice of our brother; that the blood which was shed for us, was the blood of our brother; that the grave wherein death became powerless, and from which emerged life and immortality, was the grave of our brother,—what a ground do we

stand on for the realisation and enjoyment of the blessings of salvation; and for looking forward to the coming of that glorious king, who with all the tenderness of a brother's faithful love, shall gather together the whole family of heaven in a manifest union with himself;—so working out the stupendous objects of his petition, while a supplicant on earth before the Father's throne—"Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou

lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

Therefore, when a poor sinner is awakened by the Spirit of God to a sense both of his guilt, and of the peril consequent on guilt, it is to a Brother he is counselled to look for the full and sufficient remedy; and God's word declares that his elder Brother's blood "cleanseth from all sin." If he bewails the distance which seems to be between him and an offended God, he is directed to the elder Brother, by and through whom he has liberty of immediate access. (Heb. x. 19—22)—If he trembles at the stern justice of God—the vindicator of a violated law, he is reminded that it is the elder Brother who hath redeemed him from the curse of the law, being made a curse for him. (Gal. iii. 13)—If he looks up despairingly to the gates of heaven, as if closed against his entreaties, he is told of the elder Brother, who by his own death and resurrection hath "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Let him once compass the great central fact of Christ's brotherhood—beholding it in the Spirit's light, and receiving it by faith

through the Spirit's teaching, and the heavenward path lies straight before him. It is opened up for him in Christ. His elder Brother is the way. And what awaits the tried and tempted believer, but the sympathy of a Brother—his tenderness and his love? And that dear Brother is now at the Father's right hand; and "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

Oh blessed, sustaining, consolatory truth! Let us enter into its depths, and draw up from it all we need, as sinners, for salvation;—as brethren, for consolation. Then, according to our faith, thus let us meditate:

Oh my soul! the Lord of heaven and earth is thy near kinsman in the flesh—thy Brother! Thou art guilty; but he is righteous. Thou art polluted; but he is spotless. Thou art weak, because of sin. He is strong, because of righteousness. Yet, he is not ashamed to call thee brother; for he is "the first-born among many brethren." Shall thy Brother call thee to life and blessedness, and wilt thou lie down in death, and in the winding-sheet of despair?

Shall he call thee to the strait path of wisdom, and wilt thou wander in the broad way of folly? Shall he show thee the fountain of his precious blood lying deep in the tenderness of his human heart, and wilt thou prefer the defilement of sin? Shall he bid thee look up to heaven's starry gate, thrown open for thy admittance, and wilt thou dally on the confines of hell? Shall he invite thee to the Father's adopting love, and wilt thou think hard thoughts of God, and flee from him as an avenger?

Oh my soul! hear thy tender Brother's voice, and follow as he is ready to lead thee. Can he mislead—can he disappoint thee? When have his sympathy and love ever failed towards those who have once ventured to trust him with undoubting confidence? The records of heaven, of earth, and of all time, present no instance.

Oh my soul! it is to thy Brother's sacramental table thou art now graciously invited. Shall he spread his feast, and wilt thou forsake it? Shall he offer himself to thy faith, and wilt thou meet him with unbelief? Hast thou in

times past there tasted, and found that he is gracious? There seek him now, and his banner over thee shall be love. Thy heavenly Father will meet thee there; and the blessed Spirit will vouchsafe his gracious unction. The triune Godhead waits to bless thee. That Godhead is thy heaven, thy home, thy inheritance.

"Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This is the elder Brother's voice now speaking to thee from his heart's tenderest depths. Oh my soul, answer—answer. Let faith dictate the answer; and let adoring gratitude and love bring thee prostrate at his feet.

PRAYER.

Oh God, most merciful! I praise and magnify thy holy name, that thou hast entrusted the deliverance of my soul from sin and death, to One, who, by taking my nature into his Godhead, has become my Brother in the flesh. But for this wondrous provision of grace, goodness, and power, I must have sunk into the lowest depths of hopeless perdition. Never let me doubt thy compassion, or question thy loving-kindness thus shown to me as one of the chief of sinners. Through Jesus, my Brother, I would now approach thee, beseeching thee to look on his all-prevailing merits—both of suffering and obedience, as the procuring cause of my acceptance into thy favour, as a pardoned and justified sinner. Humbly at thy footstool

I lie—waiting for him alone to bring me near unto thee. Lord, I pray thee, send thy Holy Spirit into my heart—even the Comforter; and by his blessed aid enable me to find all the wants of my soul satisfied in Jesus, my Brother.

And oh, thou sympathising and compassionate Saviour! own, I pray thee, the tender relationship into which thou didst condescend to bring thyself towards me, when thou didst assume my nature, and becamest a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Thou art not ashamed to call the posterity of the fallen Adam, brethren:—oh, be not ashamed of me, though, apart from thee, my sins might well cause me to sink down in shame and despair. Oh, gladden my heart with the assurance of what thou art to me; and lead me to the fullest participation of thy matchless love.

I long to have the light of thy countenance ever shining on me; and to have my new-born soul aspiring after a full conformity to thee in all things. Oh, my loving and most tender Brother!—feed me at thine own table with thy

precious body and blood spiritually given and received; and nourish me unto all godliness of heart and life. Keep me, with my thoughts, affections, and desires — always heavenward; and, in the day of thy glorious reappearing, raise me from the dead in thine own perfect likeness — "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

CHRIST OUR RANSOM.

It was of Ransom that they sang,
When o'er the heights of Bethlehem,
Glad angel-voices loudly rang,
And echoed to Jerusalem.

That Ransom in the manger lay,—
God's sacred Lamb, without one stain;
And smiling mercy hail'd the day,
When Adam's race might hope again.

That Ransom—rack'd upon the cross,
Show'd forth its fullness to atone,
In drops that have repair'd the loss
Which kept us from the Father's throne.

Jesus, *my Ransom!*—from this hour,
What shall withhold my soul from Thee?
Death's tyrant-grasp hath lost its pow'r;
In Thee I live;—by Thee am free.

CHRIST OUR RANSOM.

"Who gave himself a ransom for all."—1 Tim. ii. 6.

He who became our Brother, by assuming our nature, is now presented to us as our *Ransom*. It is needful that our views of this subject should be both definite and accurate, if we would draw from it all the comfort it is capable of imparting. It is common, with some minds, more to regard Christ's transaction, as our Ransomer or Redeemer, than his person, as our Ransom. In this, as well as in all previous subjects, my desire is and has been, to fix attention upon the *person* of Christ. Under the law, the person of the Goel, or kinsman-redeemer, was of primary importance. (See Levit. xxv.) A Jew—simply as a Jew, could not redeem the property or

person of another Jew; but he alone who was near of kin, whether brother, uncle, or uncle's son. As the law and practice of redemption by the near kinsman were typical, there is no difficulty about perceiving why it was necessary that Christ should become our near kinsman —our brother. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus met this necessity, by establishing, in his person, the requisite relationship; as it is written—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through *fear of death*, were all their life-time subject to *bondage*." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) The act of redemption, therefore, was the act of a brother; and that brother was *himself* the *Ransom*, or price of redemption. To ransom, is to pay down *a sufficient price* on behalf of a captive. But to redeem, is to *set free;* that is, to make sure, in the way of direct and personal application to a captive, the benefit or advantage which the

ransom or price paid is sufficient to procure.* There is, then, an important distinction between the words ransom and redeem; and also between ransomer and ransom. Christ is both our Ransomer and our Redeemer; but it is desirable that exclusive attention be now given to the fact, that he himself, in his own person, *is* our *Ransom*. This may be shown in three points of view.

Christ, as our Ransom, is, in himself, the price actually paid for—that is, in order to, our redemption. The word translated "*ransom*" in the text has a special and direct signification. It is used only in that one place in the New Testament. The fact of a ransom-price paid is, as is well known, abundantly stated in Scripture; and the particular word here used does, in a most remarkable manner, apply to Christ as our Ransom—the price paid for our deliver-

* There is a passage in Josephus (Ant. lib. xiv. cap. 14, § 1,) which exactly marks this distinction. "Herod, not knowing what had happened to his brother, hastened to *redeem* him (λυτρώσασθαι) from the enemy, and was willing to pay for his *ransom* (λύτρον) a sum of money, to the amount of three hundred talents."

ance. In order to have a clear perception of its precise signification, in reference to Christ, we must fix our minds steadily upon the nature of the captivity from which the ransom-price was to effect redemption for the posterity of Adam. Our real captivity was under the power and tyranny of *death*. Death is the central idea. And though we read of redemption from the curse of the *law*, and of deliverance from the dominion of *sin*, yet death, and captivity under the power of death, were the proper and direct consequents that followed upon human transgression. "In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt surely die;" that is, shalt be delivered over to a state of captivity under death. Such was the divine decree against transgression, in the way of penal consequence. Now, the particular word translated "ransom," has a direct reference to this; and not only properly signifies a price by which a captive is redeemed from the power of an enemy, but involves the idea of that kind of *exchange*, in which the life of one is delivered by giving up to death, the life of another. There is a passage in

Cæsar's Commentaries, which informs us that the ancient Gauls practised human sacrifices—upon this very remarkable principle, that the anger of their gods could not be otherwise appeased than by paying the life of one man for that of another.* In this custom we trace a perversion of the primary idea of human redemption by the seed of the woman—the offering of life for life. And was it not principally from a like perversion of the same blessed truth, that the heathen world in general offered human victims; and that the Canaanites, Moabites, and others, practised the horrid rite of sacrificing their own children, especially their first-born?

Now, as it was the life of man, as *a sinner*, that was given over to the captivity of death, we perceive that it was the purpose of God to redeem it by the power of a *sinless human life;* —a life that should have power to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light; and so

* "Quod pro vitâ hominis nisi vita hominis reddatur, non posse aliter deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur." —Cæsar. Comment., lib. vi. § 15.

"deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." That life could be given in the way of ransom—only by dying. When Christ had died on the cross, he had in himself, and by his own personal life, laid down the *ransom*. This was in order to redemption. But it was not redemption itself. The assertion of the power of Christ's endless life, by the fact of the resurrection from the grave, was the redemption:—it was the realised emancipation of human life from the thraldom of death; so that—human nature, in Christ, and by the Spirit of life in Christ—being made free from the law of sin and death, was made capable, not only of living eternally, but of living unto God. And, agreeably with this view of the subject, the text affirms,—not that Christ gave himself as a Redeemer—but that he gave himself a *Ransom*—a price of redemption; the possession of which made him capable of being our Redeemer, and of effecting our redemption. The paying down of the price, which was his own life—his own person—*himself*, was that which

gave him, as the last Adam, his right, by the power of his resurrection, to deliver from the power of death the posterity of the first Adam, whom he was not ashamed to call brethren. His resurrection was, in fact, the earnest and assurance of resurrection of the human species; inasmuch as it was as the last Adam, and not as an individual, that he rose. (1 Cor. xv. 22—45). He rose, as our kinsman-redeemer:—and his resurrection, therefore, was the consummating act of redemption—giving full proof of the adequateness of himself as the Ransom. The *giving himself* a Ransom was a personal act of purchase. He had a reversion in himself, of the price paid; and the assertion of it, on the brink of the riven grave, was the liberty wherewith he hath made us free. The paying down of the ransom, by dying, was a voluntary act—indispensable, if redemption was to be made sure. And the resurrection was the taking into his own possession that to which he had acquired a title, by the voluntary payment of a price.

Let it be observed, in the next place, that

Christ, in his own person, is the *effect* produced upon God the Father, who gave to death its power over man's life, as a sinner. His death,—the paying down of the ransom, was the *satisfaction* of God's violated legislation, and therefore a satisfaction rendered unto death. In the whole matter of redemption, God regarded, not us, but Christ. In us, there was no ransom. We had it not. Our life was forfeit. We could not ransom life, by paying down life. The payment on our part, could have been only the payment of a debt, due to death. But in Christ, there was not only a powerful, but a meritorious life. Between him and death, there was no matter of debt. Personally, he owed death nothing. If death took possession of his life, as the price of our redemption, it was on Christ's part, a matter of donation and surrender. Then, what was the true nature of the transaction? The life of the first Adam and his posterity was in forfeiture to death. The life of the last Adam, offered and received as a ransom for all, wrought out a reversal of the forfeiture. If, in the sight

of God the Father, it was a just and righteous thing, that the first Adam and his posterity should be in captivity to death, by reason of sin; it became equally a just and righteous thing, in the sight of the Father, that Christ, the Ransom effectually rendered, should dissolve the captivity; and that life eternal, blessed and glorious life, should be, through his resurrection, accessible to all who believe. If it was the righteousness of God that gave to death its power over man's life, as a transgressor; it is equally the righteousness of God that ensures redemption from the power of death, as consequent upon a due ransom paid. The value of Christ, then, as our Ransom, is traceable in its effect; inasmuch as it brings out the righteousness of God, in the way of mercy towards the guilty.

The last particular to be noticed is, that Christ in his own person, is himself the *benefit resulting*, to all them that believe. He *is* our Ransom. As such, he ever interposes himself between us and death; so that the captivity of death can never more return upon us. The

charter of our redemption has the seal of his precious blood upon it; and the seal was affixed when the ransom was laid down. Christ as our Ransom, is our *death* as well as our *life*. Christ is not only a ransom *for* us, but he is a ransom *in* us; and all who by faith, accept him as such, have, as redeemed and justified creatures, the power of his endless—his ransoming life, within them. When Christ offered himself once for all, he was a ransom *for* us. When we become united with him, through faith, by the Spirit, he is a ransom *within* us. There is, then, on our part, if believers, an actual appropriation of Christ. We are not only ransomed, but we have the ransom in us: so that our emancipation from the captivity of death, is as permanent as the power of an endless life can make it. Hence, it is plain, that so long as we regard only what Christ has *done for* us, we may be destitute of the benefits procured by his doing. We must go on, and appropriate Christ to ourselves by the power of faith;—not only believing in a fact, but also trusting in a power. For it

is out of a positive spiritual relation established and subsisting between him and believers, that the real benefit springs. A ransom for us, avails but little, until we make it ours;—until, as believers, we plead it, and take our stand upon it, and behold our charter of freedom established by it. If Christ be in us—the hope of glory, it is because he is *in* us, as a powerful and sufficient *Ransom.* If I can say, O death, where is thy sting!—O grave, where is thy victory! it is because Christ, *my Ransom,* hath loosed the bonds of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden by them. Thus, it will be perceived, we should go far below the teaching of holy Scripture, if we were only to declare that Christ hath given himself a Ransom *for* sinners, without going on to declare that he who hath ransomed, is *himself* the *Ransom*—the possession—and the power over death, of all them that believe. Deep mysteries; but blessed truths; not the less true, because mysterious. Do they arrest and fix our attention? Do they touch—do they move us? Then, thus let us meditate:

Oh! my soul, canst thou comprehend the power of death by reason of sin? Dost thou shudder to think of a captivity under the grasp of death, which nothing less than the life of God incarnate could dissolve? Hast thou ever thought lightly of sin, that could bring such direful consequences in its train? When thou hast felt sin bearing rule within thy heart, and giving law to every thought, emotion, feeling, word and act, hast thou failed to discover that it was working death in thee, whilst thou wast rejecting the Ransom paid for thy deliverance, treating it as if a fable? Hath the love of sin, cherished and indulged, blinded thine eyes both against captivity and redemption? Hath thy Ransom been paid, and hast thou forborne to take up, in Christ, thy charter of freedom, and—as a candidate for life eternal—to plead it at the bar of God's justice? Thou art under captivity to death, through unbelief; or thou art walking in the light of life, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Between these, there is no middle ground. Thou art a slave, or a free man!

Oh! my soul, canst thou fathom the love of Christ, which constrained him to give himself a Ransom for all? Dost thou love thyself less than he loved thee? Alas! alas! How much did he love thee! The not being ashamed to call thee brother; the taking into his Godhead thy poor nature; the poverty of his life; the shame and bitterness of his death; the hidings of the Father's face which he endured; the power of the resurrection, which he triumphantly asserted—and all, as *thy* Ransom and thy redemption—these are proofs that his love to thee was stronger than death. How do they tell upon thee? Do they draw thee to him? Art thou at this moment filled with an adoring consciousness of his love? Does a full sense of freedom from death's captivity, through faith in him and the power of his love, fill thee with rejoicings and breathings after holiness?

Wilt thou pass his sacramental table, and turn thy back on him—*wilt* thou? Bethink thee, oh! my soul. Yet, if he is not (as thy Ransom) infinitely precious to thee, do not the

sacramental occasion and its symbols reproach thee? Do they not warn thee of thy sin and thine unbelief? If sin prevail to-day, dost thou dream that it will be less powerful to-morrow? What hast thou to do with to-morrow?

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus Christ—God manifest in human flesh!—I would fain approach thee with adoration and love, as it becomes one who has been set free by the ransom-price which thou hast paid down for my redemption. Vast is the debt of gratitude I owe thee: how can I ever discharge it! My holiest purposes, and my most devoted services would all, and at the utmost, be too little. What have I, that is not thine already? what can I hope for, that does not come from thee? I have been "bought with a price;" and that price is thyself—my ransom. I would therefore glorify thee in my body and in my spirit, which are thine. But this I cannot do, except by the fulness of thy blessed Spirit dwelling within me, and sanc-

tifying me wholly. Oh! my ransom! bestow on me that earnest of my redemption; and in the power of the Holy Ghost, enable me to yield unto thee continually, my "reasonable service." Let me not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of my mind, that I may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. I desire to approach thee at thy sacramental table—there to seek those renewed supplies of grace which in body and soul I so greatly need, that I may run with patience the race that is set before me—looking unto thee—Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith. Oh! draw me thither; and there vouchsafe thy gracious and loving presence. Form and cherish within me all fitting dispositions and affections; fill me with holy thoughts, desires, and resolutions; and strengthen me both for the resistance of evil, and for activity in all that is lovely and of good report. May I spiritually feed on thee, till I grow like unto thee. May I loathe every thing that thou hatest; love all that thou approvest;

and do what thou enjoinest, while I have strength to pray, and power to believe, and grace to love; so that—this life ended, I may enter gloriously on the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Amen.

CHRIST OUR BELOVED.

(SECTION I.)

WHERE shall I look, amidst the sons of men,
For one so loving, tender, and so true,
As He who stoop'd to death, and rose again,
To open all heav'n's glory to my view?
There breathes not one on whom my heart can rest,
With such deep confidence of joyous love;
There is not in the warmest human breast,
Such influence to draw my soul above.

Often, when sorrow casts its darkest cloud,
His beams of faithful love are shining through;
And when temptation's storm is harsh and loud,
I hear his voice proclaiming peace—anew.
Faintly I go, but he sustains my heart;
Feebly I fight, when hellish hosts combine:
But, most I feel, while longing to depart—
JESUS—oh, best-beloved—Thou art mine!

CHRIST OUR BELOVED.

(SECTION I.)

"My beloved is mine, and I am his."—Song of Solomon, ii. 16.

Christ is "The Beloved" of the Church:—and justly so do we feel, when bearing in mind the relation in which he stands to us, and the aspects in which he has hitherto been presented. If, then, Christ be any thing at all to us—a substance and not a shadow;—a Saviour indeed, and not a mere abstraction—we are entitled to say, and our Christianity is worth but little, if we do not say—"My beloved is mine."

All evangelical expositors are agreed that the Song of Solomon shadows forth the espousals of Christ and his Church; and we have, therefore, no difficulty about applying the words of the text in the way of direct reference to the con-

jugal relation which subsists between Christ and all true believers. St. Paul, in the seventh chapter of his epistle to the Romans (ver. 4) distinctly recognises and teaches the doctrine of such a relation, when he says—"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Our views of Christ, and of the benefits derived from him, must of necessity be very narrow and unsatisfying, if we limit them to what he has done on our behalf, as sinners. Angels may wonder and adore on account of what he has done, while charged with the destinies of all living men;—and so may we. But, if we go no further;—if we do not trace out and experience what he *is to us*—that is, to them who believe—there is danger of our Christianity being only a sentiment in the mind, instead of a power in the heart. And this, we fear, is not uncommon. If Christianity be not a *power*

within us, then we have no power either against sin, or on the side of holiness; and if we have not Christ interwoven with our being, by the Holy Spirit, we have only the sentiment and not the power. The sentiment—Satan will blow to the winds. The power is that which shall eventually raze the very foundation of his kingdom.

The text leads us to meditate on a two-fold appropriation. The true believer has appropriated Christ to himself; and he says—"*My beloved is mine.*" Christ is then no longer an object of external contemplation; he is actually possessed. In like manner, the believer is conscious of an act, on his part, of actual surrender to Christ, and of acceptance on the part of Christ. He therefore adds—"*and I am his.*" Each, then, has a property in the other;—a property which follows on possession.

We will now state, a little more in detail, the first of these two particulars; reserving the second for the next section.

I may observe in the world about me, many an object that is desirable and suitable; and

which, if actually possessed, might be serviceable and useful; but if I have it not in possession, it can be only suitable and desirable—no more. Suppose it to be a noble estate, with its broad acres and waving forests, intersected by streams irrigating the whole, and clothing it with luxuriance and beauty; I may admire—may desire it, and imagine what temporal advantages the possession would ensure; but so long as I only admire and desire, not the smallest amount of benefit accrues to me. But, let the generous owner of that estate (acting from motives satisfactory to himself) duly sign and seal a deed of gift to me, of all that I have admired and desired, accompanied by an expression of deep and self-denying affection towards me, how differently do I survey the rich territory. The deed of gift has *vested in me a title* to every acre—to every leaf of every forest tree, and to every rich stream gushing forth with its songs of fertility and beauty. But why are my feelings so changed? Is it not because I have exercised an act of faith, upon the intention of a generous benefactor,

and upon the deed of gift, which is the record and the evidence of his intention? But for such an act of faith, I should, practically, be but a poor man still. But, *believing* the *intention,* as evidenced by the deed of gift, I should begin to bid the feeling of poverty retire to a distance, and should be prepared to show my deed of gift to all the world—at least to those around me who might be disposed, ignorantly, still to class me with the poor. But, suppose I were to find it difficult to believe the existence of such a generous intention towards me, and still further, were to doubt the genuineness of the deed of gift—what then? Why, simply for want of faith in both, I should have all the sensations of a poor man; while others, knowing the transaction, would be wondering at my stupid incredulity, and charging my poverty on myself.

Then, what is necessary in order to my becoming otherwise than a poor man? It is the act of *appropriation,* as the proper result of the act of faith. I believe in the intention that the gift should be mine. I believe in the deed of gift

that makes it mine; and now I feel it is mine, as I exercise every right of ownership inseparable from a legal possession, grounded on a legal title, which stands good, and will be maintained in every court of law—against all the world. I am, then, not a rich man, just because *entitled* to riches; but I am a rich man, in virtue of the *possession* of riches. The estate is mine.

Now this will explain what we mean, when we speak of the *appropriation* of Christ, and of all that is treasured up in him, for a believing heart. And unless we have so appropriated him, we are still hemmed in by our spiritual poverty and degradation.

It is possible for you to dream through a whole life! about the desirableness and suitableness of Christ; to imbibe all the sentiment of Christianity; to talk in the phraseology of the day; to feel a certain kind of pleasure in exercises that savour of the religious; to hear sermons about Christ and Christianity, so that they are pleasantly preached, and yet be only like a poor man surveying a princely domain, and

imagining and telling others how suitable it is for him, and how desirable, in his estimation.

It is equally possible to have the deed of gift —the Bible—with God's own seal and signature upon it—making over to you Christ, and every rich blessing in him, and yet fail to find in it such a title as shall draw after it a sure and lasting possession of Christ. It is greatly to be feared that numbers, who profess to read the Bible with seriousness of intention, do not regard it as *God's own deed,*—solemnly making over *to them,* as a free gift, Christ, and the unsearchable riches of Christ. They read it rather as a record of probabilities than of a fact; rather as affording an intimation of what they may experience, if all turns out well, than of what—on *God's veracity*— they *must* experience if they will only *believe,* and take him at his word; that is, if they will but read it as they would read a deed of gift, signed and sealed by an earthly benefactor. No man mistakes the meaning of such a deed or gift;—why then should we mistake the Bible—God's deed of gift? The

substance of God's deed of gift is, that God hath given—HATH GIVEN (not *will* or *may*, under some certain or uncertain, possible or probable circumstances give—but) HATH GIVEN to us eternal life—and this life is in his Son. This is the Gospel; the only fact—the only donation that can be good news to men "dead in trespasses and sins." It has in it the pith and the sinew and the power of salvation. It is life *given* in Christ to the spiritually dead—*because* they are dead.

To be "dead in trespasses and sins," then, and to be aware of it, is to be in a condition both to need and to receive the deed of gift and its gracious announcement—not as a problem and a difficulty—but as evidencing the gratuitousness of God's love in Christ, to the guilty and the lost. If you were not by nature, and in fact, dead in trespasses and sins, the Bible could be no deed of gift making over eternal life to you. You would not need what is there set forth, as having been freely given to you in Christ. Then let not any one assert, with his Bible open before

him, that he is not at this moment *entitled* to appropriate to himself Christ, and eternal life in him, as a sure possession. And let not any one dare to dishonour God's word by assuming that the title to appropriate Christ depends upon some previous change in his own character or condition, when God declares, in his deed of gift, that he "*hath given.*" I am thoroughly persuaded, on the experience of years of intercourse with individual minds, that great numbers whose faith fails to take possession of Christ, as God's gift of life, are restrained—*not* by an unwillingness to believe, but by a want of spiritual clearness in their perception of *what* they are to believe. They believe (what in fact is the truth of God, and necessary to be believed)—the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that he is the one, the only mediator between God and man: but they do not go on to believe as the *result* of all this—that *to them* God *hath actually made over* eternal life, as a free gift in Christ Jesus. They think it probable he may; and

they hope he will: but they do not perceive that he has *already done* it, and that the gift just awaits their simple acceptance—as a man, with a deed of gift in his hands, accepts possession of the estate to which a title is created by the deed of conveyance. And while this state of mind lasts, men may believe much that is perfectly true *about* Christ, but yet not believe so as to have *possession* of him, and the eternal life that is freely given to us in him; and they will do well to remember it is written, "He that *hath* the Son, *hath life;* and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;" and we may add, they never will have it, until they thoroughly believe that God has actually made it over *to them* as a gift, and that it just awaits their acceptance. The acceptance therefore of Christ, and of eternal life in him, on the *simple veracity* of God's deed of gift,—the Bible, is the only commencement of the Christian state. Anything short of which, that is called Christian life, is an unscriptural delusion; just as we should say that the taking possession of the

estate on the authority of the deed of gift, signed by an earthly benefactor, is the *only* commencement of a poor man's state of enrichment; and that anything short of such an enrichment is but a delusive disguise of his poverty.

Now, let it be observed, if a poor man, with a deed in his possession, professing to be a deed of *gift*, were, on perusing it, to find a clause stating that the benefactor proposed not *exactly to give*, but rather, to make over the estate to him on the payment down of *some* price, however inadequate, however disproportioned to the actual value, he would *believe* according to the intention of *that clause*. He would say, here is a *conditional* title; and my possession is dependant on my fulfilling the condition. But, I am pennyless. I cannot fulfil such a condition. I must not, then, attempt to appropriate the estate to myself. Now, many read God's deed of gift, as if his *free donation* of Christ Jesus and eternal life in him, were clogged by some such condition. They deem it presumption to

believe that the gift is free, though God absolutely declares it to be so; and though not a single clause of condition is to be found in the deed. And because they do not believe, they fail to appropriate what can be possessed *only* by faith in the *veracity* of the deed of gift.

Now, whether we believe, or do not believe the fact, that God hath given to us eternal life, and that that life is in his Son, it makes no difference in regard to the *fact itself.* God does not give, *because* we believe, and as soon as we *have* believed. But he *has given;* and just bids us believe the fact, in order to come into possession of its benefits. As the possession of what God has freely given us in Christ, *is salvation,* so the want of taking possession of what is given, *is eternal perdition.* As the possession of Christ is *life;* so the failure to possess Christ is *death.* The death in trespasses and sins, is perpetuated on the unbeliever, because he will not possess himself of the life that is given to him. So our Lord said to the Jews, "Ye *will not* come unto me, that ye might have life;"

implying that had they been disposed to accept the gift of *life,* by accepting *him,* there it was for their acceptance; and in accepting it, they would have lived by the faith of Him who loved them and gave himself for them.

If, then, we can truly say, "My beloved is mine," then we can also say—Life is mine, salvation is mine, heaven is mine—glory is mine. But we can truly say this, only where we have taken God at his word, in the exercise of simple faith on his veracity, and sincerity of intention.

If, then, in the foregoing subjects, I have succeeded in my attempts to show you Christ as our peace, our hope, our life, our way of access to the Father, our truth, our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption, our brother, and our ransom—then, remember he is ours, and became ours, and now is all these things to us, and in us, according to the purpose of God, by virtue of our acceptance of him by faith through his Spirit, as God's precious gift. The acceptance of Christ, is the appropriation of all that is in him for us. If,

then, the Beloved is not our Beloved; if we be not, by grace through faith, united to him, whatever we may think, or hope, or desire, we have no peace, no real hope, no life, no way of access to the Father; no truth, no wisdom, no righteousness, no sanctification, no redemption, no brother—no ransom. Awful destitution; and yet, the destitution of multitudes!

What shall we say to these things? Shall we put them aside as discouraging? Nay—they are most encouraging. Shall we say they are disquieting? It is well they should be so, if you are slumbering in the shadow, instead of embracing the substance, of God's revelation of himself in Christ. If they have power, by the blessed Spirit's application of them, to shake you out of a mere profession, into the glorious reality of the Gospel state, it is well they should be, not only disquieting, but disturbing. Time is passing on—eternity is at hand. The judgment will soon be set, and the books opened: therefore let us not trifle—God forbid it. Then thus let us meditate:—

Oh my soul! it is true—it is the truth of the everlasting God, that he hath given Christ for thee, in order that he might give Christ to thee, and all the fulness of eternal life, in him. He gave him unto *death,* so that by dying he might abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light, by his Gospel. The risen Saviour, filled with the resurrection-life and its power, is made over to thee, and now knocks at thine heart, craving acceptance and admittance.

Oh! hear the voice of him that raiseth the dead. Thou art, by nature, under the power of a spiritual death, and unless raised to a state of spiritual life, through faith in him who is revealed to thee as "the resurrection and the life," the power of that death must bear thee downwards. Thou art obeying the law of death, so long as thou delayest to accept the free gift of eternal life, which is *in* Christ, and which *is Christ.* Oh my soul! if thou couldst deserve the gift, thou wouldst, by deserving, be the purchaser of the gift. But thou hast deserved only death, and by thy sin hast earned or purchased death;

" for the wages of sin is death ; " while " the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Oh how tender are the mercies of thy God towards thee, in averting the terrors of the death which thou hast earned ; and in bestowing on thee, as a free gift in Christ, the life which thou never couldst have procured for thyself. Why shouldst thou be destitute of life, when it is so freely given ? Why shouldst thou fail of possession, when thou hast the deed of gift in thine hand—to read daily, with a prayerful and understanding heart ? Why shouldst thou doubt God, when thou wouldst at once act faith on the deed of gift of an earthly benefactor—making over to thee a title to a few acres of a possession on this perishable and perishing earth ? If thou art yet unsaved ; if Christ is not thy beloved, is it not a monstrous incongruity, when infinite love has poured out salvation at thy very feet, and opened up the fountains of life whose streams flow to thee and around thee ? Were it not as incongruous as for a poor man to starve

in hopeless indigence, with a deed of gift in his possession, making over to him a title to an abundant inheritance?

Christ is made over to thee, and awaits thy acceptance in the sacrament of his death, as well as in the record of eternal life. If thy faith hath faltered before, let it go forth firmly now. Approach him in the sacred mystery of his table. If false reasoning has ever blinded thee against revelation, pray now for the Holy Spirit's enlightenment. Avert thine eyes from death, and look steadily to the life set forth for thee in Christ. Take God at his word, as thou wouldst have thine own word taken by another; and surely the Spirit in thine heart shall enable thee to say, "my Beloved is mine."

PRAYER.

Oh blessed Lord Jesus, who gavest thyself for me, a poor lost sinner,—that I might live through thee, and stand accepted in thy righteousness, in the presence of thy Father and my Father, who is in heaven; I look up to thee as the "chiefest among ten thousand," and "altogether lovely." My faith hath rested on thee; and thou art my beloved. Oh, wondrous condescension!—that thou shouldest consent to be mine, and that the Father should accept me in thee—his own beloved, as well as mine! Henceforth I would live to thee; and to that end would have this rebellious flesh crucified daily, and my new man ever bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Bestow on me thy Holy Spirit

largely, that it may be so; and at thy sacred feast, minister to me every grace whereby I may adorn my Christian profession. Keep me from the self-deception of the hypocrite, and the deadness of the formalist. Separate me entirely from the tempers, affections, and habits of the ungodly; enable me to bear witness for thee wherever I go, and in what circumstances soever I may be placed. In every relation of life let me show forth the virtues of my beloved, dwelling in me by the Spirit.

Oh gracious God and Father, I would lay aside all dread of thy fierce wrath, while drawing near to thee in my beloved—who is thine; for in him, thou art revealed to me as love. I would fear thee with a reverential fear, while humbly and heartily endeavouring to serve and obey in the newness of the Spirit—crying, Abba, Father, at every step I take in the way of daily obedience. Oh Lord, keep me in the right way. Sustain me with thine everlasting arm. Deliver me from all needless fear, by the assurance that thou art on my side; and in

patience and peace enable me to possess my soul, even unto the end,—when conflict shall be past, and the crown shall be awaiting me.

CHRIST OUR BELOVED.

(SECTION II.)

Among the lilies doth He feed—
The one Beloved, who is mine;
He ministers to all my need,
And tow'rds me gently doth incline;
Redeeming Brother;—oh the bliss!
He owns me—loves me—calls me his.

He is a fountain full and free,
And living waters from Him flow;
And all His freshness flows for me,
Poor pilgrim in a world of woe.
Sustaining Brother;—oh the bliss!
He owns me—loves me—calls me his.

He is a crown of matchless light,
And now with jewell'd grandeur glows,
To glorify me in the sight
Of all who would my joy oppose;
Exalting Brother;—oh the bliss!
He owns me—loves me—calls me his.

Soon shall I lay this body down,
And wait His voice to call me home;
Ev'n to that latest hour He'll own
The ransom'd dust within the tomb;
My risen Brother;—oh the bliss!
He'll make me then for ever—his.

CHRIST OUR BELOVED.

(SECTION II.)

"My beloved is mine, and I am his."—Song of Solomon ii. 16.

It has been already remarked, that in the Christian state, there is a two-fold appropriation;—the true believer appropriates Christ, so as to be enabled truly to say, "my beloved is mine;"—and, because the believer is in like manner appropriated by Christ, he is enabled with equal truth to say—"and I am his."

These subjects are of unspeakable importance; because a right apprehension of them serves to invest the Christian state with a character of solidity and permanence. The Christian state is too commonly regarded as the product of sentiments cherished, and of performances rendered, according to the power of the sentiments;

when in truth, it is the product of a positive and very definite relation set up and maintained by grace, between Christ and the believer; out of which springs the true sentiment, the power, and the performance. If this be true—then, however we may approve the sentiments which are peculiar to Christianity, and however inclined we may be towards performance, in the way of outward duty—yet we fail in the power, because there is no Christian *state* realised, till we can say, "my beloved is mine, and I am his;"—for that declaration, uttered by the heart of a true believer, is the grateful and complacent avowal of a relation, which is cemented for eternity, between the soul's Saviour, and the saved soul;—and *that* is the Christian state. All that comes short of it, however excellent in itself, is not Christianity;—but something by which Satan deludes the soul into a false peace, which cannot result in any thing but disappointment and discomfiture in the end. If Christ be the "head over all things to the church, which is his body;" and if he be indeed "the head of the body, the

church," then—in those deep expressions, we may perceive the substance of the relation between Christ and every true believer; and understand that the believer is actually a member of Christ's body, and that Christ is the head with which every individual member is vitally connected. So then, when the church affirms—"My beloved is mine, and I am his," it is but saying, in other words—Christ is my spiritual and glorious head, and I am his living and spiritualised body.

Now, in order to perceive clearly the nature of Christ's appropriation of all true believers, we must observe, first of all, that they have been the objects of a Divine donation;—they have been made over, and actually given to him by the Father. This our Lord himself expressly declares in John xvii. 6: "I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou *gavest* me out of the world; thine they were, and thou *gavest* them me." In the ninth verse also he says—"I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou *hast given me;* for they are

thine." Again—in the eleventh verse—"Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou *hast given me,* that they may be one, as we are." Also, in the twelfth verse—"those that thou *gavest me,* I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled." Thus, we perceive, that between the Father and the Son, there has been a positive transaction on behalf of every true believer, from before all time, in order that these might be, on the part of Christ, an appropriation of all whom the Father had given to him; so that there might be set up between him and them an actual relation—the result of possession obtained. And here we may remark, that there is surely nothing to be found in Scripture that goes more forcibly than this, to confirm the truth—that every thing, from beginning to end, that concerns a sinner's salvation through Christ and in Christ, is of the free and sovereign grace of God;—for donation is doubtless an act of grace. It is always so—even when human generosity only is concerned. If God, then,

gave sinners to Christ, it was, manifestly, in order to their salvation; and, therefore, their salvation must necessarily be of grace,—altogether and exclusively of grace. Hence the apostle to the Ephesians declares, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephes. ii. 8.) If, therefore, the true believer is entitled and enabled to say, "My beloved is mine and I am his"—then, the mutual appropriation is the product of Divine grace, according to the most gracious and merciful purpose of God.

But, because, in order to make an act of donation effectual in its results and consequences, it is necessary that the thing given should be brought into actual possession, by some definite act of appropriation, it behoves us to consider Christ's redemption, (the redemption wrought out on the cross, by him who was delivered for our offences) as the definite act by which he appropriated to himself all true believers, who, by an act of sovereign grace and goodness, had

been made over to him by the Father. As between the Father and the Son, the covenant of *donation* was also the covenant of *redemption;* for, till redeemed by Christ, those whom the Father had given, could never have been appropriated, so as to have been made partakers of life eternal, as members of Christ's mystical body—the church. And that such possession of life eternal, as the result of the divine donation, was the gracious purpose of the Father, is plain from our Lord's own words at the beginning of John xvii.—"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

The redemption effected by Christ reached to two particulars: First, it was redemption from the condemnation and bondage of the law, to which those given to him by the Father were subject. Thus St. Paul to the Galatians (ch. iv. 4, 5,) says, "When the fulness of the time was

come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And again, (ch. iii. 13,) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." In the epistle to the Hebrews, (ch. ix. 15), St. Paul teaches, "For this cause, he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." And again, in ver. 11 and 12, "Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

But Christ's redemption also reached to the bondage of human iniquity, and therefore to that of the carnal mind and its enmity against

God. Thus St. Paul to Titus (ch. ii. 14) declares, "that Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Though freely given to Christ by God the Father, it is plainly taught in Scripture, that we, as sinful creatures, could not be possessed by Christ, as a "*peculiar*" people, so long as we continued subject to the condemnation and bondage of the law, or subject to the bondage of sin, ruling us, and ruling *in us* as a tyrant. The possession of us by Christ, so as to be worth anything, must be a sole, an undivided possession; a freedom from every other service, and from every other relation. This could be only by virtue of Christ's own redemption-act; to call forth which, the prior donation on the part of God the Father, was made.

The donation by God the Father, and the redemption by God the Son, invested the Son with a right and title to possess all those who were given;—but the right and title to possess, did not amount to an actual possession. The

right and title were sure and infallible in themselves;—but they availed nothing till actually put in force, by a gracious *drawing* on the part of Christ, by his Spirit, and by a personal *surrender* on the part of believers. Thus our Lord, (in John xii. 32, 33), said—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me;" —that is, all who had been given. And the Evangelist adds, "This he said, signifying what death he should die;" plainly implying that there should be an *attractive energy* in the death of Christ, as the redeeming-act which should effectually put in force the right and title acquired by donation and redemption.

In like manner, we find our Lord (in John vi. 37, &c.) clearly teaching how that attractive energy should bring about an actual surrender —a full, personal unqualified surrender, on the part of every one included in the Father's act of donation. He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own

will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

An obedience, then, to the attractive energy of Christ's death (the effect of faith through the Spirit, in the heart of the sinner) is the *personal surrender*, which completes Christ's actual possession of all whom the Father hath given to him;—which possession is maintained throughout the whole course of the believer's life on earth; and, after death, it reaches into the grave's darkest depths, where its full force is to be asserted in the believer's resurrection, and in his investiture with everlasting life, which, *in him*, by virtue of his union with Christ, shall be both a possession and a power; and thus, the redemption by Christ, from the condemnation and bondage of the law, and from the bondage

of iniquity, shall result in final and eternal emancipation from the thraldom and domination of death—that sad concentration of all the consequences of transgression.

You perceive, then, how much depends on the surrender on the part of a sinner—that surrender which is the soul's act of obedience to the attractive energy of Christ's death. The donation of the Father, as an act of sovereign grace, is complete. The redemption by the Son is equally complete, in fulfilment of the covenant between the Father and the Son; but until you have made that personal surrender, Christ's redemption avails you nothing — the Father's donation avails you nothing;—you cannot say, "my beloved is mine, and I am his;" and if you cannot truly say that, you are still alienated from God, and have not the life of God in your soul. You may have knowledge, sentiments, desires, and hopes; but—they are all in vain;—you have not yet passed from death unto life.

This subject cannot be pressed with too much urgency; for multitudes will go all lengths in the

way of profession, except to the extent of an actual surrender to Christ. Like Herod, while giving heed to John the Baptist—they will "do many things;" but they will not do this. Some do not clearly perceive that it is the first—the decisive step in the way of salvation. Their minds are filled with a misty theology—a web spun by the imagination, or the reasonings of the natural mind. They imagine that the personal surrender to Christ is to come *after* other things (such creature-amendment, and creature-service) have been accomplished. They do not understand that as sinners, and without a single inward or outward virtue to recommend them, they are to come to Christ in the fulness and reality of a personal surrender, as soon as they have knowledge of the gospel of his incarnation and the gospel of his death and resurrection—intended, with attractive force, to draw them unto him. Nor do they perceive, that the power of religion in the soul commences only with this surrender to Christ. They do not perceive that out of Christ, and apart from him, they can

do nothing, and are like dry and scar branches—in which there is no sap, no vital energy. They talk about Christ, and read about Christ, and think about Christ; but still resort to every expedient, rather then yield themselves up to him. Much that is called Christianity is a mere paganism, having the sound of Christ's name blended with a thousand other sounds, with which Christ and his finished work have nothing whatever to do. They might as well talk, and read, and think about Jupiter, or any other deity of an outworn mythology—as thus talk, and read, and think of Christ—(God manifest in flesh for the purpose of redemption,) and all the while keep at an immeasurable distance from him,—and hold off from that union with him by faith through the Spirit, which alone can entitle and enable them to say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

But once this personal surrender is made, the mutual appropriation, which is the essence of the Christian state, is complete; and then it is, that in the language of St. Paul to the Colos-

sians, we can say to true believers—"ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." (Colos. ii. 10) Then it is, that the Christian life begins to expand, by the power of the Holy Ghost, indwelling; then it is, that the living member of Christ's body, as a fruitful branch of the true vine, begins to yield those fruits of the Spirit, whose essential quality is "holiness to the Lord;" and then the substantial and abiding happiness of the Christian state has its true commencement. Then, thus let us meditate:—

Oh my soul! reflect with adoring gratitude on those riches of free and sovereign grace, so manifested in the person and office of the Lord Jesus Christ, thy Redeemer—the one mediator between God and man. Though sunk in rebellion and sin, God has not forsaken thee. While helpless, and without remedy in thyself, God has laid help for thee on one who is mighty; and brought out for thee, as a remedy, the precious blood of atonement and redemption. God hath come down to succour thee, in the person, and in the work of his own dear Son. The revelation

of his compassion and love to thee, is complete, in Christ Jesus. Thy God is no mysterious and terrible avenger. He hath reconciled thee to himself, by the blood of the cross; and amply provided that thou mightest, in Christ, triumph over sin and death, and embrace the power of an endless life. Hast thou been given to the Son for the purpose of redemption? Doth the stirring of grace within thee give proof of it? Hath not the redemption been effected for thee? Did not the law's fetters, and the law's curse, and the law's sentence unto death,—did not *iniquity's* bondage fall powerless at the foot of thy Redeemer's cross? Did not his lip—his parched lip, quivering with death-throes, declare—"*It is finished,*"—that the purposes of the Father's grace and love towards the guilty and the lost, at that dread moment had their fulfilment? Did not the dying Redeemer assert his right and title to thee? Was he not then lifted up, that he might draw thee unto him? And wilt thou—oh faithless!—wilt thou hold back? Wilt thou make no surrender to him who, having

purchased thee with his blood, now offers to thee life, peace, joy, blessing, (the result of so wondrous an achievement) freely, lovingly, without money and without price? Wilt thou not take him at his word—his own gracious —faithful word? Wilt thou be content to say, "He is not my beloved, and I am none of his"? Oh my soul, though millions of immortal ones be so content, yet be not thou! Should anything content thee,—out of Christ and away from Christ?

If thou canst truly say, "my beloved is mine, and I am his," how serenely wilt thou look on life—on death—on judgment, and on eternity. How thou wilt live by the faith of him who loved thee and gave himself for thee! How thou wilt seek to glorify him by obeying, in holiness, the motions of his blessed Spirit within thee. If he is thine and thou art his, how then wilt thou adore, and love and rejoice at his sacramental table; but if not, thou wilt turn thy back on that sacred feast; and give in thy sad testimony, that, as yet, Christ's precious death has brought in no life to thee!

PRAYER.

My adorable Redeemer, I desire to be entirely thine! Thou hast fulfilled the covenant, for the purpose of making me so. Thou hast been lifted up, that thou mightest draw me unto thee. On thy sacramental table are the memorials of that stupendous act of redemption, which has satisfied justice, overpowered death, and vanquished sin; and which, if believed in with a simple, confiding faith, has equal power to tranquillize my conscience, and to fill me with peace and joy. Oh! draw me by the power of the Holy Ghost; and constrain me, once and for ever, to surrender myself to thee; that so, knowing myself to be thine for time and for eternity, I may approach thy sacred feast, and there bind myself to thee. Oh! thou compassionate Saviour, call me thine own; write thine own new name upon

me; and let me never dishonour that sacred name by suffering sin to reign in this mortal body, that I should obey it in the lusts thereof; but let me yield myself unto God, as one who is alive from the dead, and my members as instruments of righteousness unto God; for if thou art indeed my beloved, and I am thine, then I may trust thy word, which declares, "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

Oh! my God—hast thou given me over to thy dear Son? Blessed be thy name! Perfect in me, I pray thee, the work of thine own free grace; and enable me to go up to the true dignity of a child of God—an heir of God—a joint-heir with Christ, my beloved. Hold me with thy right hand. Guide me by thy counsel; fill me with thy Holy Spirit; strengthen me for all trial; nerve me for every duty; brace me for the resistance of evil; and, in the coming day of the glory of thine own dear Son, let me be found of thee in him—at peace, without spot, and blameless.

COMMUNION-SABBATH.

THE Cherubim around the Throne
Are singing!
Wake up, and let the drowsy zone
Of sleep be all unbound,
And thy free heart be found
Sharing the deep, melodious tone
With which all heav'n is ringing.

The Angels round the Lamb once slain
Are thronging!
Oh, thou redeem'd one, on whose stain
The Lamb's blood rests with pow'r,
This is thy joyous hour;
Cast in thy lot with them, and gain
Thy place, with holy longing.

The spirits of the just are there—
All praising!
Brace up thy soul, and freely bear
Thy fond, adoring part,
And let thy happy heart
Bound with the thought—that ev'rywhere
Love's anthem is upraising.

So shall thy earthly Sabbaths be
All brightness;
And thou—in sweetest harmony
With holy ones above,
In exercise of love,
Shalt walk the way thy Saviour won for thee—
In robes of snowy whiteness.

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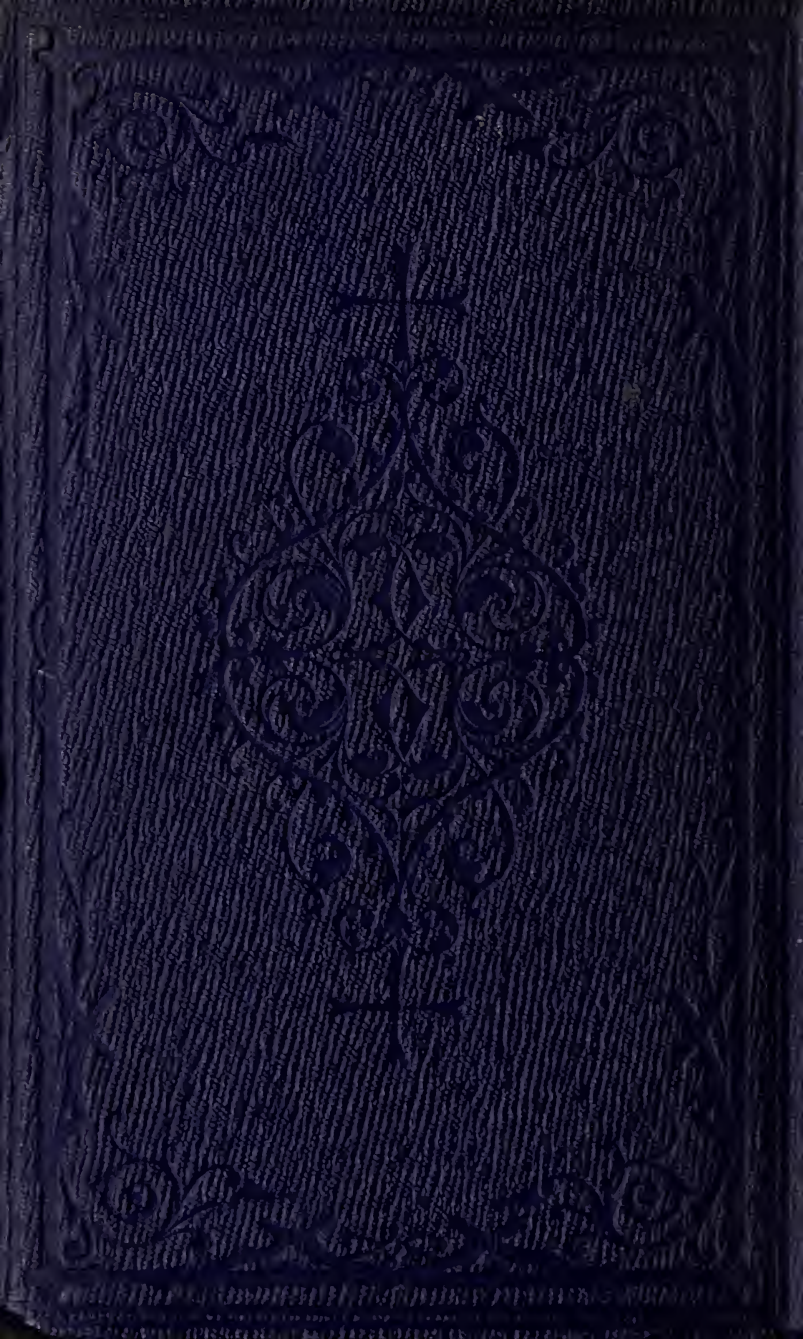
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